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THE GREAT COMMISSION

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# THE GREAT COMMISSION

OF

# JESUS CHRIST

TO

# HIS TWELVE APOSTLES

BRIEFLY DEFINED AND ILLUSTRATED.

BY

R. MILLIGAN,

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"He must reign till he has put all enemies under his feet."
1-COR. XV. 25.

*NEW AND ENLARGED EDITION.*

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# INTRODUCTION.

THE last Commission of Jesus Christ to His twelve Apostles * is the fundamental law of the Kingdom of Heaven on Earth. In harmony with its principles and sublime enunciations, the Apostles went everywhere preaching the Word, giving laws and ordinances to the people, and administering the affairs of the Church.

It seems strange, therefore, that more has not been written on this organic law of the

* This Commission was delivered directly to but eleven of the Apostles; but it was afterward through them given also to Matthias (Acts i. 26).

Kingdom; and that greater efforts have not been made to make the people understand its bearings, not only on the ministry of the Apostles, but also on that of the Church through all coming time. Surely, a right understanding of it would go far to remove popular prejudice, and to correct many of the popular errors that are prevalent in nearly all parts of Christendom. So, at least, it seems to me. And this is, therefore, my apology for now giving to the Public the following brief treatise on one of the most sublime and comprehensive portions of the Living Oracles. If this little work serves in any measure to reëstablish in the popular consciousness the paramount authority of Christ and of His Apostles, I will have gained my object in writing it.

I need scarcely say to the thoughtful reader that, in the following discussions, I aim at brevity. My purpose is not to exhaust this wonderful document, but simply to help and

induce the people to study it for themselves. In this rapid and eventful age but few exhaustive works are really necessary or desirable. We of course need a few such in every department of literature and science, chiefly for the use of the learned; but we need many *suggestive* works for the benefit of the masses. It is time that the popular mind should be aroused from the slavish lethargy of both Papal and Sectarian bigotry and prejudice, and that the people should be encouraged to think for themselves on all the great questions of life, death, and immortality. For this purpose we still need many works, written in a plain style, and adapted, in all respects, to the learning, wants, and circumstances of the masses.

Hoping, then, that, with the blessing of God, this little volume may have some influence in restoring the authority of God's Word, and in promoting the purity, peace, and prosperity of Zion, I now affectionately commend

and dedicate it to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ, and who reverently bow to His authority as the King of kings and Lord of lords.

R. MILLIGAN.

KENTUCKY UNIVERSITY,
*May* 12, 1871.

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# PART I.

## *PREFATORY AND INTRODUCTORY.*

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, *All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.*"—(Matt. xxviii. 18–20. Common English Version.)

Or more literally thus: "And Jesus came near and spoke to them saying: *All authority is given to me in heaven and on the earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit:*

*teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the age.*"

These are the words of Jesus to His eleven Apostles a short time before His ascension to the throne of the universe. He had, ere this, by the grace of God, tasted death for every man; He had been buried; He had risen from the dead the third day, according to the Scriptures; He had on sundry occasions appeared to some or to all of His Apostles, and given them many infallible proofs of his resurrection and personal identity; and now, on a mountain in Galilee, and in the presence of about five hundred of His disciples (1 Cor. xv. 6), He appeared to them again, in order to ordain and appoint them as His ambassadors to the nations; or, as Mark says, to send them out to "preach the Gospel to every creature."

How very appropriate, then, is the preface that is here given to this Commission! "*All authority*," * says Christ, "*is given to me in*

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* The word *exousia* means properly *authority*. Christ, as the eternal Logos, had always possessed infinite power

*heaven and on the earth.*" These men were now about to engage in a most difficult work; in a work that was fraught with consequences of the very highest importance to their entire race. They were about to go forth as the Apostles of a religion on which were suspended the destinies of mankind; a religion that was opposed to all the other religions of the world, to much of the literature, philosophy, politics, manners, and customs of the world; and which would, therefore, of necessity arouse against them the violent opposition of all the kingdoms, principalities, powers, and authorities of the whole earth. (See Matt. x. 21, 22, 34–36, etc.)

But to meet and overcome such opposition, they had no power in and of themselves. They were all men of the lower ranks and walks of life: men of but ordinary talents; of but little learning, wealth, or means of any kind. And hence to go forth on such a mission, with so

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(*dunamis*); though the supreme authority had hitherto been exercised by the Father. But even this is now given to the Son for a limited time, and for a specific purpose.

great a disparity of power and influence, would have been madness and folly in the extreme.

Our Saviour knew this perfectly; and He had therefore provided for them all the help that was necessary. The same infinite wisdom that had in the beginning weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance, had now fully solved the great problem of man's redemption; and had also now fully provided all that was really necessary, in order to make the mission of the Cross a grand, and glorious, and final success. This is all implied and guaranteed in the preface and sequel of this extraordinary Commission: "*All authority is given to me in heaven and on the earth.* Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you: AND, LO, I AM WITH YOU ALL THE DAYS, EVEN TO THE END OF THE AGE."

This was enough. The Apostles needed nothing more; they desired nothing more. They now went to Jerusalem; waited there a few days for the promised aid of the Holy Spir-

it; and as soon as it was received, and they were endowed with the necessary power from on high, they commenced their work of faith and labors of love, in the midst of the greatest enemies of the Cross. But whether they were in Jerusalem, Samaria, Antioch, or the uttermost parts of the earth, THEY DID AND SAID ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS. They felt that *their* agency was comparatively but as nothing. They knew that the treasure had been put into earthen vessels, in order that the excellency of the power might appear to be of God (2 Cor. iv. 7). And hence they never arrogated any honor to themselves; but in all their words, and in all their deeds, the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified. They said to kings and princes, just as they said to the lowest and humblest peasants of their realms, "Kiss the Son, lest he be angry with you, and ye perish from the way, when His wrath is kindled but a little."

This will be made plain and obvious to all, by merely citing a few brief extracts from their recorded discourses. On the ever-memorable day of Pentecost, when Peter stood up with

the eleven before the assembled thousands, from nearly all parts of the civilized world, he said to them in the conclusion of his discourse: "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses. Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, HE *hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear.* For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, Jehovah said to my Lord, *Sit on my right hand till I make thy foes thy footstool.* Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified both LORD and CHRIST."

Now, when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

Then Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you *in the name of Jesus Christ* for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

In like manner he also testified to the vast multitude that had run together to witness the

marvellous cure of the healed cripple, recorded in the third chapter of Acts. When Peter saw the wondering crowd he said to them, "Ye men of Israel, why marvel ye at this? or why look ye so earnestly on us, as though by our own power or holiness *we* had made this man to walk? The God of Abraham, and of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus; whom ye delivered up, and denied him in the presence of Pilate, when he was determined to let him go. But ye denied the Holy One and the Just, and desired a murderer to be granted unto you. And killed the Prince of life, whom God hath raised from the dead; whereof we are witnesses. *And his name through faith in his name hath made this man strong, whom ye see and know: yea, the faith which is by him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all.* And now, brethren, I know that through ignorance ye did it, as did also your rulers. But those things, which God before had showed by the mouth of all his prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled. Repent ye therefore, and turn, in order that your sins

may be blotted out, and that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. And He will send Jesus Christ, who before was preached to you; whom the heaven must receive, until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets, since the world began. For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; *him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass, that every soul who will not hear that prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people.* Yea, and all the prophets from Samuel, and those that follow after, as many as have spoken have likewise foretold of these days."—(Acts iii. 12–24.)

On the next day, when Peter and John were required to make their defence before the rulers, and elders, and scribes, and Annas, the high-priest, and Caiaphas, and John, and Alexander, and as many as were of the kindred of the high-priest—Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them all: "Ye rulers of the people, and elders of Israel, if we this day be ex-

amined of the good deed done to the impotent man, by what means he is made whole; be it known unto you all, and to all the people of Israel, *that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, whom God raised from the dead, even by him doth this man stand before you whole. This is the stone which was set at naught of you builders, which has become the head of the corner. Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.*"—(Acts iv. 8–12.)

Many other examples and illustrations might be given; but these are sufficient. They indicate very clearly that Jesus Christ, crucified, buried, risen, and glorified, was the burden of all the Apostles' preaching. He is everywhere represented by them as the living, reigning, and Almighty Sovereign of heaven and earth; but, at the same time, as being ever ready to receive and save to the uttermost all who will come unto God by Him.

The result was grand and glorious beyond all description. The word of the Lord increased and prevailed mightily. Everywhere, from

Jerusalem to Samaria, from Samaria to Rome, and from Rome to the ends of the earth, the Gospel was demonstrated to be the power of God for salvation to every believer.

And just so it would have ever been, had the professed heralds of the Cross but continued to preach Jesus Christ, and Him crucified and glorified as the power of God and the wisdom of God. Never since the fall of man did Satan obtain so great a triumph over the cause of truth and righteousness, as when he persuaded the Church to substitute tradition for revelation, philosophy for inspiration, and the authority of priests, popes, and councils, for the authority of Christ and of His Apostles. This is all in direct violation of the constitution and laws of the kingdom of heaven. The decree of God is, that Christ shall reign absolutely over the Church in His own proper person, and through the agency of His Apostles, as long as time endures.

The following passages will, I hope, make this plain and obvious to all. In Isaiah ix. 6, 7, for instance, the prophet, under the influence of plenary inspiration, thus speaks of the char-

acter, extent, and duration of the Messiah's reign. "Unto us," says he, "a child is born; unto us a son is given; and his name shall be called WONDERFUL, COUNSELLOR, THE MIGHTY GOD, THE FATHER OF THE EVERLASTING AGE, THE PRINCE OF PEACE. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end. *Upon the throne of David* (*he shall sit*), *and over his kingdom* (*he shall rule*), *to order it and to establish it, with judgment and with justice, from henceforth even forever*," * that is, as long as

* The Hebrew word *'ōlam* and the Greek *aiōn*, variously rendered *forever*, *everlasting*, *eternal*, etc., are both *relative terms;* and as such they may be applied to any age or to any period. Thus, for example, in Exodus xxi. 6, the word *'ōlam* is applied to a period of service; and it simply means that the servant should serve his master as long as he lived. In Exodus xl. 15, it is used to describe the duration of the Levitical priesthood; and it means here that this priesthood would last throughout the entire Jewish age; or as long as the old covenant would be of binding obligation. In Genesis xlix. 26, it is applied to the hills; and in this case it comprehends all future time. This is also evidently its meaning in Isaiah ix. 7; Daniel ii. 44, etc.

time shall last. His kingdom will, in this sense, be an everlasting kingdom, and He will have no successors in office.—(Daniel ii. 44.)

Still more definite, if possible, is the testimony of the Apostle Paul. In his first letter to the Corinthians, for example, while speaking of the triumphs of Christ over sin and death, he says: "*Then cometh the end when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the*

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From such premises, some have hastily inferred that these words *'ōlam*, *aiōn*, *everlasting*, etc., always refer to a limited period; and that they never mean duration without end. But be it carefully observed, *that these terms, though relative, are always perfectly exhaustive of the period or cycle to which they are applied.* If they refer simply to the period of a man's life, they exhaust it; if to future time, they exhaust it; and if to eternity, they in like manner also exhaust it. And hence, when Christ says, in Matt. xxv. 46, "These shall go away into everlasting (*aiōniŏn*) punishment, but the righteous into everlasting (*aiōniŏn*) life," He means, beyond all doubt, life and punishment without end. Eternity has no such periods as time has; at least none such are revealed to us. And hence the word *aiōniŏn* in Matt. xxv. 46, and all other similar cases, has no limitations. It is exhaustive of eternity.

*Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy, death, shall be destroyed.* For he (God) hath put all enemies under his (Christ's) feet. But when he saith, All things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted who did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject to him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all."—(1 Cor. xv. 24–28.)

These passages, then, settle very clearly and definitely the question as to the extent and duration of Christ's authority. And the following testimony of Matthew is equally conclusive touching the authority and administration of His Apostles. When Peter asked Christ what should be the special honors, rights, and privileges of himself and his eleven apostolic colleagues, He said to them, "Verily I say to you that ye who have followed me (during the period of my earthly ministry), *in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit on twelve*

*thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."*—(Matt. xix. 28.)

From this passage we may learn—

1. *That the period of the regeneration here spoken of is simply the period of Christ's mediatorial reign, extending from the day of Pentecost,* A. D. 34,* *to the end of the day of judgment, when Christ will deliver up the kingdom to God the Father.* It is very appropriately and significantly called the *regeneration,* because that during this period all the saints will be regenerated, both spiritually and physically, and the very earth itself will be renovated by fire, and prepared for the descent of the New Jerusalem.—(Rev. xxi. 1–27. See also Matt. v. 5; Rom. iv. 13; Gal. iii. 18; 2 Peter iii. 13, etc.)

2. *That the twelve tribes of Israel are here put symbolically for the Church of Christ.*

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* I here use *A. D.* (*Anno Domini*) not in its *technical* but in its *proper sense*, to denote the year of Christ's coronation, reckoned from the real epoch of His birth. This, the reader is aware, occurred about four years previous to the epoch from which Dionysius the Small reckoned in his system of chronology.

This is in perfect harmony with the figurative style and typical nomenclature of the Bible. At an early period of the world's history, Abraham was, by the appointment of God, made the father of two families: the one according to the flesh, and the other according to the spirit. The former was composed of all the natural descendants of Abraham; the latter, of all who are of the faith of Abraham. Out of the former were elected the twelve tribes of Israel according to the flesh. These were placed under the Old, or Sinaitic Covenant, and constituted the Church of the Mosaic economy (Acts vii. 38). Of the latter is composed the Church of Christ under the laws and ordinances of the New Covenant. These two Churches stood to each other in the relation of type and antitype, and hence it is that the names, titles, and attributes of the former are often by analogy given to the latter. Thus it is, for instance, that Christians are called *Jews* (Rom. ii. 28, 29); *the seed of Abraham* (Rom. iv. 11, 13, 16); *Israelites* (Rom. ix. 6, and Gal. vi. 16); *the circumcision* (Phil. iii. 3). And thus it is also that the Church of Christ is called "*the twelve tribes of*

*the children of Israel*" in the passage under consideration.

If any further evidence of this is needed, it may be found in the scope and history of the New Economy, under which "there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all and in all" (Col. iii. 11). Nothing could, therefore, be further from Christ's purpose and intention than to intimate, either here or elsewhere, that, during His mediatorial reign, His Apostles would sustain any *peculiar* relation to the Jews, or Israelites, according to the flesh. His order to them was simply this: "Go and make disciples of *all the nations;* baptize the converts, and then teach them to walk blamelessly in all the laws and ordinances of the New Covenant." And, for their encouragement in all their works of faith and labors of love, He simply added that He himself would be with them even to the end of the world.

3. *That the authority of the Apostles over the Church of Christ is still plenary and absolute.* This is very clearly and forcibly indi-

cated by their sitting on twelve * thrones and judging the twelve tribes of Israel during the entire period of the regeneration. It is true that in one sense the Apostles are now dead, as are also all their contemporaries. But in another sense they still live, and will continue to live, until at least the kingdom shall be delivered up to the Father. By the laws and ordinances which they have given to the Church, they still judge her, and will also finally judge her at the last day (John xii. 48). And hence it follows that whatever is now done according to the teaching of the Apostles, is also now done by the authority of Christ. Whatever the Church now so binds on earth, is bound also in heaven; and whatever the Church looses ac-

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* The number of the Apostles, including Matthias and Paul, was thirteen; and so also there were really *thirteen* tribes of the children of Israel. But, nevertheless, the number *twelve* was commonly used in a sort of technical or appropriated sense, to denote all the tribes of Israel. And just so the same number seems to be here used to designate all the Apostles of Christ. Or it may be that, as Paul was born out of due time, he is not included in this remark.

cording to this rule, is loosed also in heaven (Matt. xviii. 18).

From all these premises, then, it is evident that the proper order of the Church of Christ is really the same now that it was in the days of the Apostles. No change in any of her laws, ordinances, rights, privileges, and obligations, has ever been made by divine authority. Christ, as her ever-living head, is still invested with supreme authority, and is just as ready to co-operate with His people now as He was eighteen hundred years ago. He still says, not only to the Apostles, and to the Church collectively, but also to every disciple who is walking according to the apostolic rule, "*Lo, I am with you always.*"—(See John xiv. 23, and Rev. iii. 20.)

The authority of the Apostles is also the same, and their work is nearly the same. If they were here to-day in their own proper persons, they would but repeat what they did and said eighteen hundred years ago. They would not add one iota to what is recorded by their authority in the Holy Scriptures; nor would they in any wise change, modify, or abrogate, a single precept which they have left on record.

As law-givers, their work is finished, and they now live in their writings merely to judge the people, and to execute the will of God through the agency and instrumentality of the Church. To her is now committed, under their instructions, the work of this Commission. She has now but to go, as did the Apostles, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things which the Apostles have commanded; and then Christ will, according to His promise, be with her all the days, even to the end of the age.

But, in order that she may do this successfully, she must herself first fully understand the terms of this Commission as they were understood by the Apostles, and as they have been defined by their labors. But to understand all this aright will, of course, require a careful analysis of the Commission itself, and a critical discussion of all its elements in the light of all the acts and teachings of the Apostles. To this investigation I therefore respectfully invite the attention of the reader in the course of the following chapters.

# PART II.

## *THE COMMISSION PROPER.*

The several elements of this commission are all summarily comprehended in the three following specifications:

I. The Apostles were commanded to make disciples of all the nations.

II. To baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

III. To teach them all things that Christ had Himself commanded.

Let us, then, briefly consider each of these in order.

## CHAPTER I.

"*Go ye therefore, and make disciples of all the nations.*"

There is but one word in this clause that requires any explanation. The word *mathēteuō* in the first clause, is very different from the word *didaskō*, *to teach*, in the third clause. The former is from *mathētēs*, *a disciple*, or *a learner;* and this, again, comes from the word *manthanō*, *to learn*. *Mathēteuō*, then, simply means *to be a disciple;* or, when it is used transitively, as in this case, it means *to make disciples*, or *learners*.

Several things, then, are clearly taught or implied in this part of the Commission. For instance, it is implied:

I. *That Christ had died for all the nations*, or rather, if you please, for all the individual persons of whom the nations are composed; for the wildest and most barbarous of

all the tribes of Asia, Africa, America, and Oceanica, as well as for the more polished and refined Jews, Greeks, and Romans. For otherwise he would never have instructed His Apostles to go and make disciples of them. He knew of course, perfectly well, that it was only through the rich merits of His own precious blood that any man could be saved. And, had He not therefore by the grace of God tasted death *for every man*, He would never have said to His Apostles, "Go and make disciples of all the nations." In that event, He might as well have said to them, go and make disciples of the fallen angels. But this would of course have been but folly and madness. Christ would not have so tantalized his servants.

II. *We learn also from this that it is the will of Christ that all should be saved.* If He died for all, and then commissioned His Apostles to go and make disciples of all who were capable of becoming disciples, surely this ought to satisfy every reasonable man that it is not the will of Christ that any should perish, but that all should be brought to the knowledge of the truth. If, therefore, any are still without

this knowledge—without God and without hope in the world—we may rest assured that it is not owing to the will of Christ, but in spite of it, that they are in this condition.* The gracious invitation of our blessed Redeemer to all the nations is still, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters; and he that has no money—come ye, buy and eat: yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1).

III. *It is further evident, from these premises, that the Apostles had an agency in making disciples.* For, otherwise, Christ would certainly not have said to them, "Go and make disciples of all the nations."

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* This is a marvellous illustration of the respect that God has for the freedom of the human will. Much as He really desires the happiness of all men, He will nevertheless compel no one to become a Christian. Nor will He even compel any man against his will to preach the Gospel to the nations. God loves a *willing* service: and His promise to His Son from the beginning was that His people should all be *voluntary offerings* in the day of His power; that is, during His mediatorial reign, or the period of the regeneration (Psa. cx. 3).

But *how* did they make disciples? By what means and through what instrumentalities did they convert the learned and the unlearned, the rich and the poor, the bond and the free of all nations, into disciples of Christ?

Had the inspired testimony closed with the narratives of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, it might have been very difficult for us now to answer this question satisfactorily. Men of ardent imaginations might allege many ways and means of accomplishing this end. True, indeed, we might in this case reach a probable result by reasoning from analogy; by showing how men are wont to make disciples to other schools of religion and philosophy. But this would, of course, be very unsatisfactory to all classes. And, therefore, Christ has taken care that a plain and faithful narrative of the evangelical labors of His Apostles should be recorded for our benefit and our instruction, so that, in prosecuting this work, we may follow in the footsteps of the Apostles, even as they also followed the teachings and promptings of the Holy Spirit. This narrative is given to us by Luke, in the Acts of the Apostles, with suffi-

cient fulness for all practical purposes. Let us now, therefore, open this INSPIRED DIRECTORY, and see what the holy Apostles and Prophets did in executing and fulfilling this part of their commission.

We will begin with the beginning of their labors, as these are found recorded in the second chapter of Acts. These ambassadors of Jesus were instructed to remain in Jerusalem until they were endowed with power from on high. This they were required to do but for a few days. For, on the day of the following Pentecost, when they were all assembled with one accord in one place, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind; and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared to them tongues as of fire, distributed among them; and it sat on each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance" (Acts ii. 1–4).

The necessary qualifications were therefore now all imparted; and these men were now fully prepared to begin the work of making dis-

ciples. An audience only was wanting; and this want was very soon supplied by the miracle which had been wrought. The news of this rapidly spread, as if on electric wires, all over Jerusalem. Vast multitudes of the citizens, and others who had come up to the yearly festival, crowded around the one hundred and twenty disciples, and were amazed as they heard these humble and unlearned men and women speaking, in at least sixteen or seventeen different languages, the wonderful works of God.

But no one was yet converted. The people were simply filled with wonder; and most of them, it seems, were unable to give any explanation of the miracle. But some of them, filled with malice, scoffingly said, "These men are full of sweet wine."

The time for action had now come. Peter arose with the eleven, and, having calmly and briefly exposed the absurdity of the allegation, he next proceeded to show that what they then witnessed was all in harmony with what one of their own prophets had said should come to pass:

"And it shall be in the last days, saith God,
That I will pour out of my Spirit on all flesh;
And your sons and your daughters shall prophesy,
And your young men shall see visions,
And your old men shall dream dreams;
And also on my servants and on my handmaids
I will pour out of my Spirit in those days,
And they shall prophesy;
And I will show wonders in heaven above,
And signs in the earth beneath,
Blood and fire and vapor of smoke.
The sun shall be turned into darkness,
And the moon into blood,
Before the great and notable day of the Lord shall come.
And it shall be that every one who shall call on the name of the Lord,
Shall be saved" (Joel ii. 28–32).

This was a most fortunate and appropriate introduction. It, in connection with the miracle that was wrought, seems to have had a very great influence in opening the ears and the hearts of the people, so as to incline them to give heed to the things which were spoken by Peter. But still no one was yet converted. Before this could be done, Jesus Himself must be held up to the people as "the chief among

ten thousand, and as the one that is altogether lovely." And hence when Peter had gained the ears and the hearts of the people, he proceeded next to lay before them the facts of the Gospel, and especially the evidence of Christ's resurrection. This he proved—

1. *From the sixteenth Psalm*, in which David, as the type and representative of Christ, says:

"I saw the Lord always before me;
Because he is on my right hand that I should not be moved.
For this my heart rejoiced and my tongue was glad;
Moreover, also, my flesh shall rest in hope:
Because thou wilt not leave my soul in Hades,
Nor wilt thou suffer thy Holy One to see corruption.
Thou didst make known to me the ways of life;
Thou wilt make me full of joy with thy presence."

These words could not with any propriety be applied to David, as the Jews all very well knew. For he had long since died; had been buried in Jerusalem; and his flesh, like that of other men, had seen corruption. And hence there could be no doubt that in this prophecy

he had reference to the Messiah as his great antitype.

2. *He proved it by his own testimony and that of the other Apostles, as the chosen witnesses of Jesus.* This they gave in a manner and under circumstances which were well calculated to produce conviction in every heart. There was no appearance of fiction nor of uncertainty in their narrative. They simply announced to the people what they had seen with their own eyes; what they had heard with their own ears; and what they were now ready and willing, if necessary, to seal with their own blood, for the glory of God and the salvation of the world. This testimony was full, clear, and convincing. It ought to have satisfied all who were then present, that God had raised from the dead that same Jesus whom their rulers had recently crucified.

3. *He proved his proposition also by a reference to the miracle that had just been wrought, and of which they themselves were the witnesses.* There were the miraculous influences and effects of the Holy Spirit evidently shed forth on the one hundred and twenty dis-

ciples. Of this fact there could be no mistake, for the people all heard them speaking, in languages which they had never learned, "the wonderful works of God." And what other explanation of this could be given, than that Jesus, having been exalted according to prophecy to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, had now poured it out on His disciples? Evidently this was the only reasonable explanation that could be given of the marvellous phenomena, of which the multitude were themselves the eye and the ear witnesses. And hence Peter next added, in view of all the facts and arguments submitted: "Therefore, let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye crucified, both LORD and CHRIST."

The evidence was complete, and the conclusion was logically irresistible. Many were now fully convinced of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment. And, under the influence of this conviction, they now cried out in the presence of the Apostles: "Men and brethren, *what shall we do?*" Their hearts were now com-

pletely overcome by the love of God, and a deep sense of their own sinfulness. And they were, therefore, now willing, and even anxious, to sit at the feet of Jesus, and learn from Him and His Apostles what they should do to be saved.

The lesson was very soon told, and as easily learned. There was then no doubt in the minds of the Apostles that God was willing and ready to save all who would believe on and obey the Lord Jesus. And hence Peter simply said to the inquiring multitude: "*Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ,** *in order to the remission of sins, and ye shall*

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* The phrase, "*epi tō onomati tinos, upon the name of any one,*" says Dr. Edward Robinson, in his Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, means "to do any thing *upon* or in the name of a person, his name being the foundation on which the act rests. Thus, *didaskein epi tō onomati Jesou Christou* (Acts iv. 18), means to teach upon the name of Jesus; that is, resting upon His name, as the ultimate teacher and author. So *baptisthētō epi tō onomati Jesou Christou* (Acts ii. 38), means to be baptized upon the name of Christ, that is, the baptism being administered upon the profession of His name."

To the same effect also is the testimony of Dr. George

*receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.* For the promise is to you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this perverse generation."

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

So then endeth the first lesson. What do we learn from it? Evidently—

1. That, in making disciples, the Apostles first preached to the people Jesus Christ and Him crucified, submitting to them at the same time the evidence of His resurrection, ascension, and glorification.

2. That in this way faith was wrought in the hearts of their hearers, as Paul also testifies

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Benedict Winer, in his Grammar of the New Testament Diction, Section xlviii., Art. on the preposition *epi.*

It is evident, therefore, that both repentance and baptism, *on the name or by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ*, were required of the Pentecostal converts, in order to (*eis*) the remission of their sins. On any other ground they would have both been utterly unavailing.

in Romans x. 17, where he says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

3. That to such as were moved by their faith to inquire what they should do to be saved, the Apostles simply replied: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, in order to the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." *

A second lesson might be learned from Acts iii. 1–iv. 4; a third, from Acts viii. 5–13; a fourth, from Acts viii. 26–39; a fifth, from Acts

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* In all this there are of course some things implied which are not fully and formally expressed. For example:

1. That these converts all *loved* God and *prayed* to Him. This is natural. Every man who really believes with all his heart that God is, and that He is the rewarder of them that diligently seek Him, will most assuredly both love Him and pray to Him.

2. That they also, like Timothy, made "*the good confession*" (1 Tim. vi. 12, 13). This, it would seem, was never omitted in the primitive Church, for Christ says: "On this rock (that is, on the truth confessed) I will build my Church" (Matt. xvi. 15–18). And Paul says: "With the heart, man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto sal-

x.; a sixth, from Acts xiii. 4–12; a seventh, from Acts xiii. 13–52; and many others also from subsequent chapters of this same inspired and infallible directory. But from all these we gather substantially the same facts, viz., that, in making disciples, the Apostles always—

1. Preached Jesus to the people, thereby producing in their hearts faith, hope, love, prayerfulness, and a deep sense of their own sinfulness and unworthiness.

2. That they everywhere submitted to the people as conditions of pardon—

(1.) *Faith* in the Lord Jesus Christ.

(2.) *Repentance*, or a thorough change of will and purpose.

(3.) *A public confession* of the Lord Jesus Christ, such as Peter made near Cæsarea Philippi (Matt. xvi. 15–18).

(4.) *Baptism*, by the authority of Christ, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

3. That they baptized without delay those

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vation."—(See also Matt. x. 32; Hebrews iii. 1, iv. 14, x. 23, etc.)

who received the word with joy and gladness.

4. And that they afterward continued to instruct them diligently in all things that Christ had commanded.

IV. This, then, is to be our directory in all our efforts to make disciples of all the nations. I say in all *our* efforts, for that this work is now committed to the Church under Christ, according to the laws and ordinances given by the Apostles, is evident from the following considerations:

1. *It is clearly implied in the terms of this Commission.* Our blessed Saviour said to His Apostles: "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the age." In this declaration of Christ, it is clearly implied that the obligation to make disciples would in some way and in some sense rest on the Apostles throughout the entire Christian age; and that, during this whole pe-

riod, Christ would be ever present with them, to aid and to bless them in this work. But in what sense is this true? In what sense can it be true? The Apostles are now all dead. For nearly eighteen hundred years they have all slept with their fathers, so that *personally* they have long since ceased from their labors. But *officially* they still live in their writings, and, as law-givers and judges, they still sit on thrones, directing, instructing, and edifying, every congregation of faithful disciples. They still work through the Church for the consummation and accomplishment of the work begun on Pentecost. To her they have committed the word of reconciliation, for the enlightenment and salvation of the world (1 Tim. iii. 15; 2 Tim. ii. 2; Rev. xxii. 17, etc). He that now hears the Church, so long as she acts according to the inspired word, hears the Apostles, and he that hears the Apostles hears Christ (Luke x. 16). And hence it is that on the Church, as the divinely-appointed agent of the Apostles, acting with their advice and under their authority, now rests the responsibility of making disciples of all the nations.

2. *This is still further evident from the labors of the Apostles and the history of the primitive Church.* The apostolic age was emphatically the missionary age of the Church. Then every new convert to Christ was a new element of strength to the missionary cause. Under the direction of the Apostles, the disciples went everywhere preaching the word, and assisting in every way that they could, to advance the kingdom of Christ on earth. This is so fully illustrated throughout the Acts of the Apostles, that a mere reference to this illustrative book is sufficient to convince every intelligent and thoughtful reader of the inspired Word, of its truthfulness. It was not the Apostles only, but also their coadjutors, acting with their advice and under their instructions, that turned the world upside down by preaching the Gospel to every creature under heaven, within the short period of about thirty years after the coronation of the Messiah (Col. i. 23). What further proof, then, is necessary, in order to convince all who plead for the restoration of the primitive faith and practice, that "the Church, as the pillar and support of the truth," is now

solemnly bound to make disciples of all the nations? Surely any further evidence on this subject would be wholly superfluous.

But, in all our efforts to convert the world, let us beware that we depart not from the example and instructions of the inspired Apostles. So long as they sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, so long will the laws which they have given to the Church be of binding obligation on all the followers of Christ. If, then, we would labor successfully in our efforts to turn many to righteousness, we must, like the Apostles, demonstrate to the people—

1. That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

2. That He was buried.

3. That He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures (1 Cor. xv. 1–4).

4. That He has been exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour; and that He has become the author of eternal salvation to all them that obey Him (Heb. v. 9).

And by this, I do not mean to say that the whole work of making disciples has now been committed to the Church. Certainly not. God

has reserved to Himself much the greater part of the work, both in making disciples and in edifying the Church. So Paul clearly teaches in the third chapter of his first letter to the Corinthians. "Paul," he says, "may plant and Apollos may water: but it is God that giveth the increase." And, to show his comparative estimate of the Divine and the human elements in this evangelical work, he adds: "So, then, neither is he that planteth, any thing; neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase."

This testimony is clear and conclusive; and it is, moreover, in beautiful harmony with the promise of Christ, that He would be with the Apostles and all their faithful converts and coworkers, even to the end of the world. (See also John xv. 5; 2 Cor. iii. 5; Phil. ii. 12, 13; Hebrews ii. 4, xiii. 20, 21, etc.)

But be it remembered "that God's ways are not as our ways, nor are his thoughts as our thoughts." Such matters are too high for us. It is not, I think, assuming too much to say that we know none of God's works or operations perfectly. We understand many of them

in part, but only in part. We see, for instance, that He makes the herbs of the field grow, and bring forth fruits and flowers, by furnishing to them in various ways the necessary amount of heat, moisture, and electricity, together with their constituent elements of oxygen, carbon, hydrogen, etc. But is this all that He does? Who can tell? What botanist can define and describe for us all the springs and avenues of vegetable life?

Or take, if you please, the animal economy. Is there any less mystery here? It is with very great pleasure and satisfaction that we trace the food taken into the stomach through the various processes of chymification, chylification, etc. But what physiologist has ever been able to explain satisfactorily the more recondite and ultimate processes of animal life?

And, as we ascend still higher in the scale of being, is it not further manifest that mysteries multiply? What living philosopher can now fully explain even the phenomena of his own spirit, not to speak of the infinitely more profound and mysterious operations of that

Spirit that garnished the heavens, and that brought again from the dead the body of the Lord Jesus?

It seems to me that a being who does not know himself; who does not comprehend the essence of his own spirit, and who cannot perfectly explain even those ordinary operations by which it moves his body, and gives life, energy, and direction to all his members—such a being should, I think, be very cautious in his attempts to set limits to the power and the operations of Jehovah. If God has created the universe, He of course knows how to govern it; how to touch any spring or cord that may be necessary to produce any desired effect. And if all created means, providentially directed and applied, are not sufficient to accomplish the given end or purpose, He has in that event but to speak and it is done; but to command, and it stands fast.

We have therefore no controversy with any one touching the workings and operations of the Spirit of God in the regeneration of man: provided that he does not, by his false theories and vain speculations, contradict the word of

God, or make void the means which God has Himself provided, in infinite wisdom and love, for the salvation of mankind. But this much we may and we do affirm:

1. *That God is no respecter of persons* (Acts x. 14; Rom. ii. 11, etc). And therefore whatever He does for the salvation of one man, He is willing and anxious to do, under like conditions and circumstances, for the salvation of all men.

2. *That the word of God is the good seed of the kingdom, by means of which the Holy Spirit begets a new life in the soul.* This is proved by the following passages:

(1.) "I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you. For though ye have many instructors in Christ, ye have not many fathers: *for, in Christ Jesus, I have begotten you through the Gospel*" (1 Cor. iv. 14, 15). From this it is very evident that all the members of the Corinthian Church had been begotten by means of the Gospel. But the Holy Spirit is the author of the Gospel. And hence this passage serves to explain, at least in part, how it is that the Spirit begets

a new life in the soul of every convert of Christ.

(2.) "*Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth*, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures" (James i. 18). Here the Father is said to beget Christians by means of the word of truth. But He evidently does this by His Spirit: for, says Christ, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth" (John vi. 63).

(3.) "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth, through the Spirit, unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently, *being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever*" (1 Pet. i. 22, 23). From this we learn that all the Christians of Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, were begotten by the Holy Spirit through the word of truth. And surely what was true of these, and of the Corinthian brethren, and of all the Hebrew converts who were scattered abroad, is true also of all Christians at all times, and under all circumstances. (But see also Luke viii. 4–15; John vi. 44, 45, etc.)

3. *That there is not in all the Bible a single instance of any one's being begotten or regenerated without the word of truth; nor is there given in the Holy Scriptures any evidence that an Apostle or Prophet ever prayed that any one might be baptized in the Holy Spirit in order to his conversion.**

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* It has long been a question with critics, whether or not the baptism of the Holy Spirit is still continued in the Church of Christ. I am inclined to think that it is, for the following reasons:

1. It seems, from the testimony of John the Baptist, that Christ was to be a *baptizer* as well as himself; and that *all* who were baptized by him in water, would also be baptized by Christ either in the Holy Spirit or in fire. (See Matt. iii. 11, 12.) But it can hardly be supposed that this prophecy was wholly fulfilled in the baptism of the one hundred and twenty *Galileans* on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 34. It is not necessary to speak here of Cornelius and his household; for of course none of them were baptized by John. We must therefore either conclude that the prediction of John, given in Matthew (iii. 11, 12), so far as it relates to the baptism in the Holy Spirit, was wholly fulfilled in the baptizing the one hundred and twenty disciples at the beginning of Christ's mediatorial reign; or, otherwise, we are constrained to admit that Christ still baptizes in the Holy

Why, then, should erring and fallible men attempt to be wise above that which is written? Why neutralize and set aside the power of the word of truth, as God's own appointed means

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Spirit, and that He will continue to do so "through all the days, even to the end of the age." Which, then, of these two positions best accords with the text and the context given in the third chapter of Matthew, the first of Mark, and the third of Luke? Reader, what sayest thou?

2. The whole Church, or body of Christ, is now actually filled and animated with the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. iii. 16, 17; Eph. iv. 4; etc.). And not only so, but every faithful member of this body is also filled with it; so that we really dwell in the Spirit and the Spirit in us (John vii. 38, 39; 1 Cor. vi. 19; Eph. v. 18; etc.). And hence it seems to be a *fact* that the spirit of every Christian is immersed in the Holy Spirit. Whether or not this should be called a baptism in the Holy Spirit, is a mere question about words; and whether it is the same overwhelming influence of the Spirit as that to which John the Baptist referred in speaking of Christ, may be a question for critics. But, be this as it may, it seems quite evident, from the above and other parallel passages, that the spirit of every Christian is as really immersed in the Holy Spirit as were the spirits of the one hundred and twenty disciples when the Spirit was first poured

of conversion? Why not preach the word as did the Apostles and Prophets, and leave things that are not revealed to the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit? Why leave undone that part

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out on the day of Pentecost at the beginning of the kingdom. For, be it observed that the power to work miracles, which was then bestowed on the Apostles and others, was really no part of this baptism. It was to the one hundred and twenty disciples a necessary qualification, in order to the work of their ministry; and it was also to the multitude a sign and demonstration, that these disciples were all under the influence of the Holy Spirit. But I see no evidence whatever that this supernatural power was itself the baptism in the Spirit, or that it was in any way essential to it. Balaam possessed this power in part, and so did Judas; but neither of them was ever *baptized* in the Spirit. This seems to be the peculiar honor and birthright of those who, under the reign of the Messiah, believe in Him; in all of whom we are assured that the Holy Spirit actually dwells as a well of water springing up into everlasting life (see John iv. 14, vii. 37–39; Acts ii. 38, etc.).

3. In Hebrews vi. 2, Paul evidently regards and treats the doctrine of *baptisms* (in the plural number) as an existing elementary principle of the Christian religion. And this also seems to imply that all the disciples of Christ are still baptized in the Holy Spirit as well as

of the work which God has assigned to us, and engage in the discussion of those profound and recondite matters which He has reserved to Himself? What would you think of the farmer

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in water. For baptism in water, baptism in the Holy Spirit, and baptism in fire, are the only three baptisms known and recognized under the reign of Christ.

I am aware that, in Ephesians iv. 5, Paul says that there is but *one* baptism. And, from this, some have very confidently inferred that baptism in water is now the only divinely-appointed and authorized baptism; while others have just as confidently inferred from this passage that baptism in the Holy Spirit is now the only valid and divinely-authorized baptism.

The difficulty, however, in this case is only apparent. It arises wholly from the want of a due appreciation and comprehension of the proper scope of Paul's argument in Ephesians iv. 1–16. In every such case, we should consider very carefully what is the extent and what the comprehension of the premises; for, otherwise, we are ever liable to embrace too much in our conclusion; that is, we are liable to have something in our conclusion which is not found in our premises. This error is very frequently committed in interpreting the Holy Scriptures. From some of Paul's remarks, for instance, in the fourteenth chapter of Romans, some have inferred that *all days* are now alike holy; and that we are there-

who would cease to plough and sow, and still hope to reap an abundant harvest, by simply investigating the mysterious processes of vegetable life, which lie far away beyond the reach

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fore now under no obligation whatever to sanctify the Lord's-day. But in Paul's premises we find no allusion to the Lord's-day, or to any other Christian ordinance. The Apostle is in this chapter speaking only of such things as are in themselves wholly indifferent. And hence we cannot from these premises draw any conclusion whatever concerning the Lord's-day.

And just so it is with the argument of the same Apostle given in Ephesians iv. 1–16. From it we can infer nothing whatever, either for or against the baptism in the Holy Spirit, or the baptism in fire. The Apostle has here reference solely and exclusively to that baptism by and through which we are put into the one body, and made members of the one body. If some of the Ephesians had been baptized into Paul, some into Apollos, some into Cephas, and some into Christ, then indeed there would seem to be a propriety in their being separated into different sects and parties. But as they had all been baptized through the instructions and influence of one Spirit, into the one body, any schism in that one body would now seem to be as inconsistent with the unity of their baptism as it was with the unity of their faith.

of all human philosophy? Surely such a course of procedure would indicate on the part of any man a great want of practical wisdom. And yet this is just what a great many learned men

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To baptism in water, then, and to it alone, the Apostle has here reference. And hence the alleged discrepancy between Ephesians iv. 5 and Hebrews vi. 2 is only *apparent*—one of our own construction and imagination. And hence we conclude that the doctrine of *baptisms* (in water, in the Holy Spirit, and in fire) is still an important and fundamental element of the faith that was once delivered to the saints. This at least seems most probable from all the premises.

But even if this were proved beyond the possibility of a doubt, it would by no means follow that any sinner is ever baptized in the Holy Spirit in order to his conversion. This baptism is administered by Christ Himself, not to the alien, but to the Christian. The law of the kingdom of heaven, as given by the Apostles to all inquiring believers previous to their baptism in water, is simply this: "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, in order to the remission of sins, *and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts ii. 38). And accordingly, Paul says to the brethren of Galatia, "Because ye are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father" (Gal. iv. 6). And to the Ephesians, he

have been long doing in their misguided zeal and efforts to reap a harvest of immortal souls. They have in a measure ceased to sow *the good seed of the kingdom;* and they have too often instructed inquiring souls to wait until the Spirit of God sees fit to renew them by its own direct operations. Thousands, it is to be feared, have followed their unauthorized instructions, who are to-day beyond the reach of hope and mercy. God said to them, Believe the Gospel and obey Christ in all things which He has commanded. But their teachers and religious guides said to them, *Wait, wait, wait!* They did wait, until at length hell became their portion.

It is time, therefore, that all such speculations should cease, and that all who preach the Gospel should preach it in its purity and sim-

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says, "In whom [Christ] ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the Gospel of your salvation: in whom also, *after that ye believed*, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise; which is an earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of His glory." (See also John vii. 37–39; Acts v. 32; Romans v. 5, viii. 9–11; 2 Cor. i. 22; Eph. iv. 30; etc.)

plicity, as did the Apostles of Christ. Let this be done by all, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and times of refreshing will again come from the presence of the Lord.

V. *Finally, we may learn from these premises that there is imposed on every one who hears the Gospel a very high obligation to receive it and to obey it.* For if Christ has by the grace of God tasted death for every man, and if He has sent the Holy Spirit to convince all of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, then surely it is not a light matter to neglect, or to treat with indifference the offers of pardon, and justification, and sanctification, and redemption through the infinite merits of His own atoning blood. The man who wilfully does this, imperils his own salvation, and is in danger of eternal condemnation. "For Moses truly said unto the fathers, A Prophet shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren, like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts iii. 22, 23).

It is an awful thing, then, for a poor, helpless, perishing sinner to reject, even for a day or an hour, the overtures of Him who has all authority in heaven and on earth, and who will certainly judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom, when He "shall come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel; who shall be punished with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in His saints, and to be admired in all them that believe" (2 Thess. i. 7–10). Haste, then—

"Haste, O sinner, to be wise;
Stay not for the morrow's sun;
Wisdom warns thee from the skies,
All the paths of death to shun."

## CHAPTER II.

"*Baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*"

In the investigation of this subject, the following queries are naturally suggested:

I. What is the meaning of the word *baptize?* What action did Christ intend to express by the use of the original term *baptizō?*

II. Who are to be baptized? Or, in other words, who are proper subjects of baptism according to the terms of this Commission?

III. What is the meaning of the phrase, "*into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?*"

Let us briefly consider each of these in order.

### SECTION I.

*What is the meaning of the word baptize (baptizō)?*

For the last five hundred years, this has

been a question of growing interest throughout Christendom. And even to-day the investigation is still increasing in interest and importance. This is owing chiefly to the influence that baptism has on the unity, harmony, and prosperity of the Church of Christ. A diversity of practice with regard to this ordinance serves to divide the Church itself. And, to estimate fully the consequences and bad effects of this division, is not a problem that is to be solved by the common rules of logic, or the known laws and principles of mathematics. The evils reach far beyond the narrow limits of time and sense. They belong not to the finite, but to the infinite.

It is very important, therefore, that every man who hears the Gospel, and especially that every man who preaches the Gospel, should know what our Saviour meant when He said to his Apostles, *Make disciples and baptize them.* And this, I think, may be easily done by any and every man who can lay aside his prejudices, and listen honestly to the testimony of inspired and uninspired witnesses. In this brief discussion I have not, of course, room for even a tithe

of the evidence that might be given on this subject; but, nevertheless, I will endeavor to so indicate and illustrate the proper course of argument as to enable even the unlearned reader to draw for himself a fair logical and scriptural conclusion.

Let us, then, notice very briefly—

## I.—A Few Examples from Classic Authors.

1. Aristotle, who flourished about three hundred and fifty years B. C., and who is celebrated throughout the world for his great accuracy in the use of terms, says, in his work "Concerning Wonderful Reports," vol. vi., p. 136: "They say that the Phœnicians, who inhabit the so-called Gadira, sailing four days outside of the Pillars of Hercules, with an east wind, come to certain desert places full of rushes and sea-weed; which, when it is ebb-tide, are not *immersed* (*baptizō*), but when it is flood-tide are overflowed (*katakluzō*)."

2. Polybius flourished about one hundred and fifty years B. C. In his "History," book xxxvi., ch. 3, 7, while describing the manner of

taking the sword-fish with a sort of spear, or harpoon, he says: "And even if the spear falls into the sea, it is not lost: for it is composed of both oak and pine; so that when the oaken part is *immersed* (*baptizō*) by the weight, the rest of it is buoyed up and easily recovered."

3. Again, in book iii., ch. 72, 4, of the same work, the author, speaking of the passage of the Roman army across the swollen Trebia, says: "They passed through with difficulty, the foot-soldiers being *immersed* (*baptizō*) as far as their breasts."

4. Diodorus Siculus flourished about thirty years B. C. He wrote a history consisting of forty books; in the first of which, while describing the rapid rise of the Nile during its inundations, he says: "Most of the wild land animals are surrounded by the stream and perish, being *submerged* (*baptizō*); but some escaping to the high grounds are saved."

5. Strabo, the contemporary of Diodorus, says in book vi., ch. 2, 9, of his "Geography:" "Around Acragas (in Sicily) are marsh-lakes, having the taste of sea-water, but of a different nature: for even those who cannot swim are

not *immersed* (*baptizō*), but float like pieces of wood."

In all these examples, which might be greatly multiplied to the same effect, it is evident that nothing but the word *immerse*, or some one of its equivalents, would meet the requirements of the context. To substitute for it either *sprinkle*, or *pour*, or *wet*, or *moisten*, or *wash*, in any of these cases, would make sheer nonsense.

## II.—Examples from the Septuagint.

This version of the Old Testament was made in Egypt, under the patronage of Ptolemy Philadelphus, about two hundred and eighty years B. C. The word *baptizō* occurs in it but four times: twice in the canonical books, and twice in the Apocrypha, as follows:

1. 2 Kings v. 14: "And Naaman went down and *immersed* (*baptizō*) himself seven times in the Jordan, according to the saying of Elisha; and his flesh came again as the flesh of a little child, and he was clean."

2. Isaiah xxi. 4: "My heart wanders, and iniquity *overwhelms* (*baptizō*) me."

3. Judith xii. 5–9: "And the servants of Holofernes brought her (Judith) into the tent, and she slept till midnight. And she arose when it was toward the morning watch, and sent to Holofernes, saying, Let my lord now command that thy handmaid may go forth unto prayer. Then Holofernes commanded his guard that they should not hinder her. Thus she abode in the camp three days, and went out in the night into the valley of Bethulia, and *immersed* (*baptizō*) herself in the camp at the fountain. And when she came up, she besought the Lord God of Israel to direct her way to the raising up of the children of her people. So she came in clean, and remained in the tent until one brought her food in the evening."

4. Wisdom of Sirach xxxiv. 30 (English version 25): "He that *immerses* (*baptizō*) himself after touching a dead body, if he touch it again what availeth his washing?"

In the first of these examples, the word *baptizō* is evidently used in its literal physical sense. There can be no doubt that Naaman *dipped* or *immersed* himself seven times in

the river Jordan. In the other examples, the word is used figuratively. But, nevertheless, it retains in every case the *ground idea* of an immersion. In the second, as given in Isaiah, the immersion is represented as if caused by a wave or flood of iniquity. In this tropical sense, we are often said to be *overwhelmed* or *baptized* in cares, troubles, sufferings, etc. In the third and fourth examples, the idea designed to be expressed is that of a washing, made more thorough and complete by an *immersion* of the whole body; as when the Jews are said to wash themselves by immersion when they come from the market, etc., Mark vii. 4. The word commonly used to denote a washing of the whole body is *louō;* but *baptizō* is frequently used instead of *louō*, when the person or thing to be washed is wholly immersed in water.*

* From this custom seems to have originated the practice of baptizing proselytes among the Jews. There is no *direct* and *positive* evidence that this was in use before the destruction of Jerusalem. And hence some learned critics have inferred that it was derived from Christian baptism. But, as the Jews regarded and

## III.—Examples from the New Testament.

The verb *baptizō* occurs in the New Testament eighty times, and the noun *baptisma* twenty-two times. Of these the following will suffice for illustration:

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treated the Gentiles as unclean, Acts x. 28, etc., and as they were wont to purify the unclean, whether persons or things, by immersing them in water, Mark vii. 3, 4, it is most likely that the practice of baptizing proselytes was in vogue before the beginning of the Christian era.

But, in any event, the Jewish custom but serves to confirm the doctrine of Christian immersion. The ceremony of proselyte baptism is thus given by Rabbinical writers: The candidate for baptism, after having been circumcised and healed of his wound, "was stripped of all his clothes in the presence of three witnesses who had acted as his teachers, and who now acted as his sponsors, the fathers of the proselyte, and led into the tank or pool. As he stood there, up to his neck in water, they repeated the great commandments of the law. These he promised and vowed to keep; and then, with an accompanying benediction, *he plunged under the water.* To leave one hand-breadth of his body unsubmerged would have vitiated the whole rite."—(Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, and Kitto's Encyclopædia, Art. Proselytes.)

1. Matt. iii. 5, 6: "Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the region round about the Jordan, and were *immersed* (*baptizō*) by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins."

2. John iii. 23: "And John was *immersing* (*baptizō*) in Ænon, near to Salim; because there was much water there."

3. Acts viii. 36, 38: "And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water. And the eunuch said, See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be *immersed* (*baptizō*)? . . . . And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch: and he *immersed* (*baptizō*) him."

4. 1 Cor. x. 1, 2: "Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant that all our fathers were under the cloud; and all passed through the sea; and were *immersed* (*baptizō*) into Moses, in the cloud and in the sea."

5. Col. ii. 12: "Buried with him in *immersion* (*baptisma*), wherein also ye are risen with him, through the faith of the operation

of God who hath raised him from the dead."

In all these cases, the radical idea of an *immersion* is made quite obvious by the terms and conditions of the context. In the first example, this is so very plain that no other words could be used to express it more clearly. In the second, the reason assigned for choosing Ænon as a place of baptizing is wholly without force and significance on any other hypothesis than that John was an *immerser*. The word Ænon means a fountain, or rather a great fountain. It comes from the intensive form of the Hebrew word *ahyin*, which means a fountain. From the third example, it is very obvious that more than a cup of water was necessary in order to baptize the eunuch. In the fourth, the historical circumstances, as well as the terms of the context, all go to show that the Israelites were *immersed* into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And, from the fifth, it is quite obvious that in every legal baptism there is, and of necessity must be, a symbolical representation of a burial and a resurrection. This is seen in every case

of *immersion;* but never in a *sprinkling* or a *pouring.*

## IV.—Examples from Josephus.

Flavius Josephus was born in Jerusalem, in A. D. 37, and died in Rome about A. D. 100. He was of the sacerdotal order, of the sect of the Pharisees, and well instructed in both Greek and Hebrew literature. After the destruction of Jerusalem, A. D. 70, he accompanied Titus to Rome, where he spent the rest of his days in literary pursuits. His "History of the Jewish War," and his work on "Jewish Antiquities," were both written in Hebrew, and afterward translated by himself into Greek. The former was published about A. D. 75, and the latter about A. D. 90. He is certainly one of the most learned of all the Hellenistic Greek writers; and, as he was contemporary with the Apostles, his writings are of the highest authority in settling the question as to the New-Testament meaning of the word *baptizō.* The following examples are sufficient to illustrate his use of this term:

1. "Jewish Antiquities," book iv., ch. 4, 6.

Describing the manner of purifying the people during the thirty days that they mourned for Miriam, our author says: "When, therefore, any persons were defiled by the dead body, they put a little of the ashes (of the red heifer) into spring-water; and *immersing* (*baptizō*) a branch of hyssop in it, they sprinkled them with it both on the third day and on the seventh; and after that they were clean."

2. "Antiquities," b. ix., ch. 10, 2. Speaking of the case of Jonah, Josephus says: "Now at the first they durst not do so" (cast Jonah overboard), "esteeming it a wicked thing to cast a man who was a stranger, and who had committed his life to them, into such manifest perdition. But at last, when their misfortunes overbore them, and the ship was just going to be *submerged* (*baptizō*), and when they were animated to do it by the prophet himself, and by the fear concerning their own safety, they cast him into the sea."

3. "Antiquities," b. xv., ch. 3, 3. Describing the death of the young high-priest, Aristobulus, who, at the command of his brother-in-law, Herod the Great, was by the Gauls drowned

in a swimming-bath, he says: "Continually pressing down and *immersing* (*baptizō*) him as if in sport, while swimming, they did not desist till he was entirely suffocated."—(See also "Jewish War," b. i., ch. 22, 2.)

4. "Jewish War," b. ii., ch. 18, 4. Speaking of the suicide of Simon after putting to death all the members of his own family, our author says: "So when he had gone over all his family, he stood on their bodies, to be seen by all; and stretching out his right hand, that his action might be observed by all, he *plunged* (*baptizō*) his entire sword into his own bowels."

5. "War," b. ii., ch. 20, 1. Having described the retreat of Cestius, the Roman general, from the walls of Jerusalem, Josephus says: "After this calamity had befallen Cestius, many of the most eminent of the Jews swum away from the city as from a ship when it is going *to be submerged* (*baptizō*)."

6. "War," b. iii., ch. 8, 5. In this instance, Josephus is trying to persuade his Jewish brethren that it is better for them to fall into the hands of the Romans than to commit suicide. He says: "It may also be said that it

is a manly act for one to kill himself. No, certainly; but a most unmanly one: as I should esteem that pilot to be an arrant coward, who, out of fear of a storm, *would sink* (*baptizō*) his ship of his own accord."

7. "War," b. iii., ch. 9, 3. Describing the frightful condition of vessels in the port of Joppa during a violent storm, he says: "Now as these people of Joppa were floating about in this sea, in the morning there fell a violent wind upon them (it is called, by those that sail there, the Black North-wind), and then dashed their ships one against another; and dashed some of them against the rocks, and carried many of them by force, while they strove against the opposite waves, into the main sea. For the shore was so rocky, and had so many of the enemy on it, that they were afraid to come to land: nay, the waves rose so very high that they *overwhelmed* (*baptizō*) them."

8. "War," b. iii., ch. 10, 9. Speaking of the unequal contest between the Jews and the Romans on the Sea of Galilee, he says: "And when they (the Jews) ventured to come near the Romans, they became sufferers themselves,

before they could do any harm to the others, and *were submerged* (*baptizō*) they and their ships together; . . . . and as for such as *were submerged* (*baptizō*) in the sea, if they lifted their heads up above the water, they were either killed by darts or caught by the vessels."

Other examples might be given, but these are quite sufficient to warrant the conclusion that, in the writings of Josephus, the word *baptizō* always means *to immerse*, *submerge*, *plunge*, or *dip*.

## V.—Testimony of the Greek and Latin Fathers.

As the testimony of Josephus is of the highest authority in settling the current Hellenistic meaning of the word *baptizō* in the first century of the Christian era, so also the testimony of the Christian Fathers is of paramount importance in determining what was the practice of the primitive Church in administering the ordinance of baptism. And it therefore gives me pleasure to say that, under this head, the evidence is full and unequivocal. The

few following examples will suffice for illustration:

1. Cyril, Bishop of Jerusalem, was born at or near Jerusalem, about A. D. 315, and made bishop in 350. In his "Instruction on Baptism," he says: "For as Jesus, assuming the sins of the world, died, that having slain sin he might raise thee to righteousness; so also thou, going down into the water, and in a manner *buried* (*thaptō*) in the waters, as he in the rock, art raised again, walking in newness of life."

2. Basil the Great, Archbishop of Cæsarea, and one of the most learned of the Greek Fathers, was born in Cæsarea, in Palestine, A. D. 328, and died January 1, 379. In his work "On the Holy Spirit," he says: "Imitating the burial of Christ by the *immersion* (*baptisma*), for the bodies of those *immersed* (*baptizō*) are as it were buried in the water." And again he says in the same passage: "The water presents the image of death, receiving the body as in a tomb."

3. John (afterward called Chrysostom, the golden-mouthed) Archbishop of Constantinople, and eminent both for his learning and his

piety, was born in Antioch, about A. D. 347, and died in exile A. D. 407. In his "Commentary on 1 Corinthians," discourse xl., i., he says: "For *to be immersed* (*baptizō*) and to sink down, then to emerge, is a symbol of the descent into Hades, and of the ascent from thence. Therefore Paul calls the *immersion* (*baptisma*) the burial, saying, We were buried with him by the *immersion* (*baptisma*) into death."

4. Theophylact, Archbishop of Bulgaria, in his "Commentary on Nahum," about A. D. 1070, says: "For there is one *immersion* (*baptisma*), as also one faith, because of the doctrine respecting the initiation being one in all the Church, which has been taught to *immerse* (*baptizō*) with the invocation of the Trinity, and to symbolize the Lord's death and resurrection by the threefold sinking down and coming up."

5. Tertullian, one of the most learned and pious of the Latin Fathers, was born in Carthage, about A. D. 160, and died about A. D. 240. In the following extracts from the writings of this eminent scholar, we have the most clear

and satisfactory evidence with regard to the action of baptism in the primitive Church.

(1.) In his work "On the Resurrection of the Body," ch. xlvii., he says: "Know ye not that so many of us as were *immersed* (*tingo*) into Christ Jesus, were *immersed* (*tingo*) into His death? . . . . For by an image we die in *baptism* (*baptisma*); but we truly rise in the flesh, as also did Christ."

(2.) In his work "Against Praxeas," ch. xxiv., he says: "And last of all, commanding" (referring to the command of Christ in Matt. xxvii. 19) "that they should *immerse* (*tingo*) into the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit."

(3.) "On the Soldier's Crown," ch. iii.: "Then we are three times *immersed* (*mergo*), answering somewhat more than our Lord prescribed in the Gospel."

(4.) "On Baptism," ch. vii.: "As of *baptism* (*baptismus*) itself there is a bodily act, that we are *immersed* (*mergo*) in water; a spiritual effect, that we are freed from sins."

6. Ambrose was born at Treves, in Gaul, A. D. 340, and died at Milan, A. D. 397, where he

had presided as bishop for about twenty-two years. In his work "On the Sacraments," b. ii., ch. 7, he says: "Thou wast asked, Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty? Thou saidst, I believe; and thou *didst sink down* (*mergo*), that is, thou *wast buried*."

7. Jerome was born at Stridon, in Dalmatia, about A. D. 342, and died in Bethlehem, in Palestine, A. D. 420. He has, by common consent, been styled "the greatest of all the doctors in expounding the divine oracles." In his "Commentary on Ephesians," b. ii., ch. 4, he says: "And thrice we are *immersed* (*mergo*), that there may appear one sacrament of the Trinity."

8. Alcuin was born in York, England, A. D. 735, where he was well instructed by "the venerable Bede." In A. D. 782 he was invited to France by Charlemagne, who constantly consulted him on all matters pertaining to the religious and literary improvement of his empire. In his "Epistle to the Church at Lyons," while speaking of the common doctrine and practice of the Catholic Church, he says: "And so in the name of the Holy Trinity, he" (the

candidate) "is *baptized* (*baptizō*) with a trine *submersion* (*submersio*)."

Such extracts might be multiplied indefinitely, but this is unnecessary. Those already given, in connection with the examples and illustrations cited from the Greek classics, the Septuagint, the New Testament, and Josephus, prove beyond all doubt that the proper meaning of the word *baptize* is to *immerse;* and that immersion was, in fact, for several centuries, the common practice of the Christian Church. * This, it gives me pleasure to say,

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* From about the middle of the third century, *sprinkling* or *pouring* was, in cases of alleged necessity, occasionally substituted for *immersion.* The practice became more general as the authority of the Apostles waned, and that of the Popes increased, in the Western Churches. But "it was not till the year A. D. 1311 that the legislature, in a council held at Ravenna, declared immersion or sprinkling to be indifferent. In Scotland, however, sprinkling was never practised, in ordinary cases, till after the Reformation, about the middle of the sixteenth century. From Scotland it made its way into England, in the reign of Elizabeth, but was not authorized in the established Church."—(*Edinburgh Encyclopædia, Art. Baptism.*)

is the testimony of Luther, Calvin, Turretin, Bishop Bossuet, Bishop Taylor, George Campbell, Moses Stuart, Dr. Wall, Mosheim, Gieseler, Neander, and, in fact, I may say, of all the most eminent writers on this subject, Pedobaptist as well as Baptist.

How, then, does it happen that *sprinkling* is now so prevalent throughout so great a part of Christendom? By what authority has it been substituted for *immersion*, and on what authority does it now rest as an ordinance of the Church of Christ?

On the Catholic hypothesis, it is a very easy matter to answer all such questions. Concede that the Pope is the infallible successor of the Apostle Peter, and that to him have been committed the keys of the kingdom of heaven, with all the authority that is necessary to change times and laws *ad libitum*, and then all is plain and consistent. Then, indeed, he may substitute pouring, sprinkling, or any thing else that he chooses, for immersion. This, as perhaps all my readers are aware, is the Catholic ground of defence; and we are constrained

to admit that it has at least the merit of consistency.

But, can any Protestant defender of sprinkling give as consistent an answer to these questions? Can he stand up before heaven and earth, and say to the candidate for baptism, "By the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, I sprinkle or pour water upon you?" If so, where is this authority given?

It is of course conceded by all true Protestants, that the Apostles have really no successors; that they themselves still live in their writings; and that in this capacity they still rule and govern the Church, and will govern it, while Christ sits on the throne of His glory: and, moreover, that this being so, it is now not only presumptuous, but also exceedingly sinful and dangerous for any man or body of men to change, or in any way set aside, any law or ordinance which bears the seal of Apostolic authority. This is, in fact, the cardinal and fundamental principle of Protestantism. The man who receives this, and consistently conforms his life to it, is a Protestant; nay, more, he is a Christian. But the man who rejects

this fundamental principle, and claims that there is now authority vested in any man or council, to change or modify, in any sense, a law or ordinance of Christ, is a Papist. There is really no middle ground to be occupied on this question.

Whence, then, I again ask, do Protestants derive their authority for either pouring or sprinkling water on the face or person of any man?

I do not wish to be censorious. I have no pleasure in finding fault with such men as Luther, Zwingle, Calvin, Knox, and Wesley. I revere their memories, and humbly try to imitate their many virtues. But, as an apology for the errors and inconsistencies of these great and good men, be it remembered—

I. *That they were all more or less under the influence of Popery; as, perhaps, we all are, to some extent, even to this day.* The work of reformation is, of necessity, a very slow and difficult process. It is so even with an individual, but it is much more so with a people, a Church, or a nation. Nothing short of plenary inspiration would have enabled Luther, Calvin,

and Wesley, to at once divest themselves of all the evil effects and influences of their previous education, and to see in their just and proper proportions all the elements of the entire plan of redemption. They each did a great and glorious work in their day and generation; and all things considered, they did it well. But they found the Church under a cloud; and with all their zeal, labor, and self-denial, they were able to but partially disperse the dense fogs and mists which were then intercepting from her vision much of the glorious light and effulgence of the Sun of Righteousness.

II. There is also another element that should always be taken into the account in every attempt that we make to apologize for the great and good Protestant Reformers; and to estimate aright the great and mighty work which, under God, they have done for the civilization and salvation of the world. If it is true, as it undoubtedly is, that all men now see but in part and know but in part, it is also equally true that, owing perhaps chiefly to our very limited field of vision, *one extreme almost invariably leads to another.* This is a law of

our fallen nature, from the influence of which even the great and good Reformers of the sixteenth, seventeenth, eighteenth, and nineteenth centuries, have not wholly escaped. They found, for instance, in the Roman Catholic Church the very absurd doctrine of baptismal regeneration. This gave to baptism, as an element of the Christian system, an influence and an importance which the holy Apostles and Prophets never attached to it. The error is, in fact, fundamental and soul-destroying. It ascribes to the shadow what can only belong to the substance. It substitutes the water of baptism for the blood of Christ and the renewing influence of the Holy Spirit, to the eternal disappointment and ruin of thousands—perhaps, indeed, of millions, who might be saved through the influence of the truth.

All true Protestants have felt this, and protested against it. But, while avoiding Scylla, how very liable we all are to fall into the vortex of Charybdis! While opposing the errors of baptismal regeneration, and every other species of formalism, many Protestants have unwittingly fallen into the opposite extreme.

Some ignore baptism in water as a matter that is wholly inconsistent with the known spirituality of the Christian religion. Others regard it as "a mere outward sign of an inward cleansing;" and, from these inadequate and erroneous premises, they hastily infer that it is of but little consequence how this outward sign is applied, provided only that water be used in some way as a symbol of inward purification.

That this is the ground now occupied by most Protestant pedobaptists, will appear from the following concessions of the very learned, pious, and amiable Prof. Philip Schaff. He is very justly regarded as a representative man; and he gives, in substance, the views of nearly all the great and good Protestant pedobaptist Reformers. In speaking of the action of baptism in his "History of the Christian Church," vol. i., p. 123, he says: "That the usual form of the act was *immersion* is plain from the original meaning of the Greek *baptizein* and *baptismos;* from the analogy of John's baptism in the Jordan; from the Apostles' comparison of the sacred rite with the miraculous

passage of the Red Sea, with the escape of the ark from the flood, with a cleansing and refreshing bath, with a burial and resurrection; and from the custom of the ancient Church, which prevails in the East to this day." And, again, on the same page, he adds: "Unquestionably *immersion* expresses the idea of baptism more completely than *sprinkling*. But it is a pedantic Jewish literalism, to limit the operation of the Holy Spirit by the quantity or the quality of the water. Water is absolutely necessary to baptism as an appropriate symbol of the purifying and regenerating energy of the Holy Ghost; but whether the water be in large quantity or small, cold or warm, fresh or salt, from river, cistern, or spring, is relatively immaterial."

This is, in some respects, the opposite extreme of the Popish doctrine. If Catholic pedobaptists overestimate the value of baptism as an element of the Christian system, it is equally obvious to every candid and unprejudiced student of the Living Oracles that Prof. Schaff and his many Protestant pedobaptist brethren undervalue it. And hence

it is not at all surprising that, with their inadequate views of the design of baptism, they should, as a matter of convenience, substitute *sprinkling* for *immersion*.

III. There is still another matter to be considered in this apologetic explanation of the conduct and teachings of many of the great Protestant Reformers. *The extreme error into which many of them have fallen, touching the action of baptism, is owing largely to their neglect or failure to discriminate properly between moral and positive institutions.* A moral law or ordinance has its foundation, first, in the nature of God; and, secondly, in the nature and relations of things created. It may, therefore, not unfrequently be at least partially understood from the study of Nature, and especially of the relations which the subjects of the law sustain to each other and to the law-giver. And hence it is that in the Holy Scriptures moral laws are for the most part expressed generically; or it may be that they are merely indicated by some moral example which expresses to the mind of the Christian philosopher a moral law or principle, just as the fall

of Newton's apple indicated to his mind the existence of a physical law.

But a positive law has no such natural basis. It depends for its existence and all that pertains to it, wholly and exclusively, on the will of the law-giver. And hence the necessity that *every positive law should be expressed in the most clear, definite, and specific terms possible:* and, furthermore, that *it should be interpreted and obeyed according to the strict letter and conventional meaning of the terms used to express it.*

This important difference between moral and positive precepts will be best understood and illustrated by an example. Take, for instance, the lesson that Christ taught His disciples, as recorded in John xiii. 13–15: "Ye call me master and Lord" (says Christ); "and ye say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

What is the nature of this injunction? Does Christ, by His example and instruction on this occasion, design merely to teach His disci-

ples a great *moral* lesson? or does He, as some think, design to make feet-washing a *positive* ordinance in the Church, like baptism and the Lord's Supper? If the former is His intention, then it is obvious that the duty inculcated by His example is a very broad and comprehensive one. It requires simply that, as the followers of Christ, we should perform any and every menial service which may be necessary to promote in any way the health, comfort, and happiness of our brethren. This may consist in washing their hands, bathing their temples, or sponging their bodies, as well as in washing their feet. But not so if this is a *positive* ordinance. In that event, nothing but the literal washing of the feet will meet the requirements of Christ. It will not do to wash the face, bathe the body, or sprinkle water on the feet, as a substitute for this. The feet must, in that event, be literally washed, just as Christ washed the feet of His disciples; or otherwise the ordinance is perverted.*

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* Some persons, observing this difference between the moral and positive precepts of God, have erroneous-

To those who have any remaining doubts on this subject, I would respectfully recommend

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ly inferred that the latter are of more binding obligation on us than the former; and that, when they come in conflict with each other, as they are often supposed to do, we should therefore, in all such cases, obey the positive and disregard or neglect the moral.

But, can there be any *real* conflict in the laws of God? Are they not all expressions of His will? And can His will be ever at variance with itself? This is, of course, often the case with the human will. Man is imperfect; ever liable to err; and hence it is not strange that his laws and purposes should often be in conflict with each other. But it is not so with God. He is infinitely perfect. And hence it follows, of necessity, that all His *coexisting* laws are in perfect harmony with each other. True, indeed, He may, for wise and benevolent reasons, make different laws for different ages and dispensations; and these may sometimes seem to be in conflict. He may, for instance, require that, in one age. the seventh day of the week shall be wholly sanctified to His glory; and that, in another, the first day of the week shall be so set apart and sanctified. But, between those laws and ordinances that are of the same age, and under the same economy, there can be no conflict whatever. To affirm otherwise, is to speak disparagingly of the wisdom and perfections of God.

the careful study of the laws and institutions of Moses, both moral and ceremonial. And, as an introductory lesson for the instruction and

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Neither is it true that the positive precepts are more important and of more binding obligation on us than the moral. The former are in a good measure arbitrary, depending chiefly, or solely, on the will of the law-giver; and may, therefore, be changed by him at pleasure. But not so, certainly to the same extent, with the moral laws of God. These have their foundation primarily in His own nature, and their conditions in the relations which the subjects of His moral government sustain to Himself and to one another. And hence it follows, of necessity, that the laws are as permanent and as immutable as are the relations on which they depend. No lapse of time, or mere change of circumstances, can ever cancel or annul the moral obligations which every rational man owes to his Creator. And hence Christ gives to the law of love the supremacy over all other laws. "Hear, O Israel," said He, "the Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like it, namely, this: Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. *There is none other commandment greater than these*" (Mark xii. 29–31).

encouragement of beginners in this department of moral philosophy and sacred literature, we will take the consecration of the priests, as recorded in Exodus xxix., and Leviticus viii. and ix. In the course of this ceremony it was required—

1. That Moses should bring Aaron and his sons to the door of the tabernacle, and then wash them in water (Lev. viii. 5, 6).

2. That he should clothe them in their own proper sacerdotal garments (v. 7–9).

3. That he should anoint the tabernacle, the laver, the altar, and Aaron himself, with oil made out of given parts of pure myrrh, cassia, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, and olive-oil (v. 10–12. See also Ex. xxx. 22–33).

4. That he should bring a bullock for a sin-offering; cause Aaron and his sons to put their hands on its head; kill it; put some of its blood on the horns of the brazen altar; pour out the rest of the blood at its foot; burn the fat on it, and the rest of the carcass without the camp (v. 14–17).

5. That he should bring a ram for a burnt-offering; cause Aaron and his sons to put their

hands on its head; kill it; sprinkle its blood on the altar; and then burn the whole victim as a holocaust on the altar (v. 18–21).

6. That he should bring another ram for a peace-offering; cause Aaron and his sons to lay their hands on its head; kill it; put some of its blood on the right ear of Aaron and his sons, on the thumb of their right hand, and on the great-toe of their right foot; and then sprinkle the rest of the blood on the altar (v. 22–24).

7. That he should then take the fat of this ram of consecration; his rump, his kidneys, his caul, and his right shoulder, with one loaf of unleavened bread, one cake of oiled bread, and one wafer anointed with oil; put them into the hands of Aaron and his sons, wave them for a wave-offering, and then burn them on the altar (v. 25–28).

8. That he should wave the breast, and take it as his own portion (v. 29.)

9. That he should take some of the blood of this ram of consecration from the altar, mingle it with oil, and then sprinkle the com-

position on Aaron, and on his sons, and on their garments (v. 30).

10. That he should cause Aaron and his sons to boil the rest of the flesh of this ram, at the door of the tabernacle, and then eat it with unleavened bread (v. 31, 32).

How very definite, then, and minute are all these specifications! Every particular, even to the consecration of the right ear, the right thumb, and the great-toe of the right foot of Aaron and his sons, is limited, defined, and particularized, by a "*Thus saith the Lord.*" And for the wilful neglect of any such law, rule, or regulation, the penalty was death. "The soul," says God, "that doeth aught presumptuously, whether he be born in the land, or is a stranger, the same reproacheth the Lord; and that soul shall be cut off from among his people. Because he hath despised the word of the Lord, and hath broken his commandment, that soul shall be utterly cut off; his iniquity shall be upon him" (Numb. xv. 30, 31). This law was fearfully illustrated in the case of Nadab and Abihu, who, it seems, with the spirit

of a modern rationalist, presumed to offer strange fire before the Lord (Lev. x. 1, 2).

But does any one allege that there is now no such law, or principle, binding on the followers of Christ?—and that, under the Gospel, we are at liberty to disregard every thing like "*Jewish literalism*," and to change or modify the positive ordinances of Christ, according to our own imperfect sense of propriety? If so, *where is this license given?* Let any one produce it, and then the question as to the proper action of baptism is settled forever. We will all reverently bow to the law of Christ, and rejoice in the liberty bestowed.

But be not deceived. Every such suggestion is from the Man of Sin. Paul, speaking by the Spirit, teaches us a very different lesson. "For if the word spoken by angels," he says, "was steadfast, and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward, how shall we escape if we neglect so great salvation?" (Heb. ii. 2, 3.) It is therefore just as true under the New Covenant, as it ever was under the Old Covenant, that not even one jot or one tittle of the divine law can

be wilfully neglected, or set aside with impunity (Matt. v. 18). So long, then, as the twelve Apostles sit on twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, so long will it be the solemn duty of every man who hears the Gospel, and believes it, *to be buried* with Christ in baptism; and also in it to rise with Him, to walk in newness of life. (See Rom. vi. 1–4, and Col. ii. 12.)

That sprinkling and pouring, then, should be universally discarded, and that all true believers should be immersed into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we respectfully but most earnestly plead and urge, chiefly for the following reasons:

I. *This is the law of Christ given in the Commission, and plainly illustrated by the evangelical labors of the Apostles, and other primitive Christians.** This, of itself, is a

* If Christ intended that His Apostles should *sprinkle*, *pour*, *wash*, *wet*, or *moisten*, the disciples with water, why did He not say so? All scholars concede, without debate, that the words *raino* and *rantizo* mean to sprinkle; that *cheo* means to pour; *louo*, to wash the body;

reason that is altogether sufficient and paramount. For, if Christ has all authority in heaven and on the earth, it is certainly His province to command, and it is our duty as well as our honor and privilege to obey.

II. *Because, if this were done, it would serve very greatly to promote unity, peace, and har-*

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*nipto*, to wash the hands, feet, etc.; *pluno*, to wash garments; and that *brecho* means to wet, or moisten. But it is also equally certain that there is no other word in the Greek language that expresses the idea of *immersion* so clearly, distinctly, and definitely, as the word *baptizo*. Why, then, did Christ and His Apostles use it?

We often, with much force and propriety, ask the Pelagian, If, by the word *phusis* (nature) in Eph. ii. 3, the Holy Spirit meant *ethos* (custom) or *nomos* (law), then, why did it not use one of these terms in this connection? Why use the word which, in both classic and Hellenistic Greek, is most frequently used to denote that which is *innate*, or *inborn?* And just so we may here inquire with regard to *baptizo*. If, by this term, the Holy Spirit did not intend to express the idea of an immersion, why did it not use some other word? Why, on this hypothesis, did it use that very term which, of all the words in the Greek language, expresses the idea of an immersion most clearly and distinctly?

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*mony among the followers of Christ.* For this our Saviour Himself prayed, and for this all His faithful disciples are now praying. But it is utterly vain to expect unity, peace, and harmony among God's people, so long as sprinkling or pouring is substituted for immersion. Many of us never can, and by the grace of God never will, unite with others on such a basis. We love to see peace and harmony in the Church; but we dare not, for the sake of these, sacrifice a law or ordinance of Christ.

III. *It would tend very greatly to the conversion and salvation of the world.* When Christ prayed that all His followers might be one, He, of course, had some reference to their own comfort, convenience, and welfare. But it is worthy of remark that His main object in making this request was, that the world might believe (John xvii. 21). He foresaw, of course, all the evil consequences of division among His followers; and He desired that as far as possible they might all be prevented. But that which seems to have most deeply affected His great and tender heart was the fact that, in consequence of these divisions, many precious

souls for whose redemption He was about to die, would be lost—finally and utterly lost!

Will, then, our pedobaptist friends think of these things, and do what they can to remove existing evils? It is utterly vain to expect union on any basis of human construction. We must, of necessity, have the sanction of DIVINE AUTHORITY before we can be united, and coöperate as we should for the conversion and salvation of the world.

## SECTION II.

*Who are to be baptized?*

Evidently not the *nations* as such, but the *disciples.* The word *nations* (*ethnee*), in the Greek, is in the neuter gender, and the pronoun *them* (*autous*) is in the masculine. And hence the pronoun represents by *syllepsis* only those who, through the instructions of the Apostles and their coadjutors, become disciples of Christ. Besides, it is evident from the terms of the Commission, that the work of making disciples is prior, in point of time, to that of baptizing.* Christ

* This same lesson is also very plainly taught in many other passages of Scripture, as well as in the Commis-

says, Go and *first* make disciples; *secondly*, baptize them; and, *thirdly*, teach them to observe all things whatever I have commanded. But to make disciples of all persons in any and every nation is practically impossible. Some persons, as infants and idiots, have not the capacity that is necessary in order to become disciples; and others have not the will or the disposition to come to Christ, and to submit to His authority. "Ye will not," says Jesus, "come to me that ye may have life."

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sion. Thus, for example, it is said in John iv. 1, that "*Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John:*" from which it is plain that both John and Jesus first made disciples, and then baptized them. During Christ's personal ministry here on earth, He made many disciples, but none of them were baptized into Him as their Leader, until the day of Pentecost, which next followed after His death, burial, and resurrection. Many were, of course, baptized under His ministry, according to the baptism which John preached. But it was not till the day of Pentecost, A. D. 34, that the disciples of Christ were by His authority baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. And hence it is evident that a man may, nay rather that he *must*, be a disciple of Christ before he is baptized. He

And hence we never read of the Apostles baptizing any but penitent believers; men and women who realized and acknowledged that they were sinners; and who trusted in Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of sinners.

This point is so very important that I deem it necessary to illustrate it with more than ordinary care and precision. Let us, then, if you please, notice every case of baptism recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, and as many other

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is not a *Christian* until, like Christ, he is *anointed* with the Holy Spirit, which ordinarily takes place immediately after baptism: though Cornelius and his household were so anointed before they were baptized. But this was an extraordinary case. The law of the kingdom of heaven, touching the anointing of the Holy Spirit, is given as follows by the Apostle Peter, in his reply to the earnest inquiry of the Pentecostal believers: "Repent," he says, "and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; *and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*" And in harmony with this, he says, in Acts v. 23, that God gives the Holy Spirit to them that obey Him. Every Christian is therefore a disciple of Christ; but every disciple of Christ is not a Christian. A Christian is an anointed disciple.

cases of conversion as may serve to throw light on this subject. These examples are, of course, the very best possible commentary on the Commission; and they were recorded for our instruction and guidance in the great work of saving the world from sin and death. They occur as follows:

I. Acts ii. 37–41: "Now when they heard this" (all that Peter had just said respecting Christ as the anointed Sovereign of the universe), "they were pierced to the heart, and said unto Peter, and to the rest of the Apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. *Then they that gladly received his word were baptized;* and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls."

This is all in beautiful harmony with the terms of the Commission. Christ had said to His Apostles, Go and first make disciples, and then baptize them.* They did so. They first preached the Gospel to the people; and then they baptized those, and those only, "who gladly received the word."

II. Acts iii. 19–21, and iv. 4: "Repent, therefore, and turn, that your sins may be blotted out, in order that the times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send forth Jesus Christ, before appointed for you: whom the heavens must indeed receive, until the times of the restoration of all things which God spoke by the mouth of all the holy prophets from the beginning. . . . *But many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men became about five thousand.*"

This is but another illustration of the same

* No one was ever baptized by the authority of Christ into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, before the beginning of the kingdom, on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 34. But, previous to this, Christ had many *disciples*.

Divine order and process of making disciples, and adding them to the Church. Through the good providence of God, the multitudes were gathered together, and Peter preached to them Jesus Christ and Him crucified. And having again demonstrated that Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, and perceiving, no doubt, from sundry clear and unmistakable indications, that many of his audience had faith to be saved, he said to them: "Repent, and turn to God, in order that your sins may be blotted out, and that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." For this the Apostles were imprisoned and persecuted. But, nevertheless, many of those who heard the word, believed and obeyed.

Here, then, we have another clear case of the conversion and implied baptism of adults. But in all that is said in this part of the sacred narrative, there is not the slightest evidence that any but *believers* were added to the Church.

III. Acts v. 12–14: "And by the hands of the Apostles were many signs and wonders wrought among the people. And they were

all with one accord in Solomon's porch; and of the rest durst no man join himself to them; but the people magnified them. *And believers were the more added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women.*" Here we have given another very marked instance of *believers* being added to the Lord, but no others.

IV. Acts vi. 7: "And the word of God increased; and the number of disciples multiplied in Jerusalem greatly; and a great company of the priests were obedient to the faith." Here, again, we observe the same train and order of events. The influence of the Gospel is greatly increased in Jerusalem; and, as a consequence, a great many *priests*, but no children, became obedient to the faith.

V. Acts viii. 5–12: "And Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. For unclean spirits crying with a loud voice came out of many that were possessed with them; and many taken with palsies, and that were lame, were healed. And

there was great joy in that city. But there was a certain man called Simon, who beforetime in the city used sorcery, and bewitched the people of Samaria, giving out that he himself was some great one: to whom they all gave heed, from the least to the greatest, saying, This man is the great power of God. And to him they all had regard, because that of long time he had bewitched them with sorceries. *But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized both men and women.*"

From this passage, it is evident that the primitive Evangelists, in making converts to Christ, followed strictly the law of the Commission, as did also the Apostles. Philip does here in Samaria just what Peter had before done in Jerusalem. That is, he first preached the Gospel to the people, demonstrating beyond all reasonable doubt that Jesus is the Christ. And when they believed Philip, they were baptized, both men and women, but no infants.

VI. Acts viii. 35–38: "Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same Scripture,

and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came to a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still, and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him."

Whether the thirty-seventh verse of this chapter is genuine or spurious, does not in the least affect our present argument. For, from the whole connection, it is obvious—

1. That it was God's purpose to convert the eunuch; and that this was to be done according to the law of the Commission, by preaching Christ to him.

2. That, through the preaching of Philip, the eunuch was led to believe in Christ: as Paul says in Romans x. 17, "Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

3. And, finally, it is evident that, as soon as he believed, he was baptized, and went on his way rejoicing.

VII. Acts ix. 17, 18: "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared to thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it were scales; and he received his sight forthwith, and arose and was baptized."

Paul, like other men, was converted to Christ through the influence of the truth. And when he *believed* in Christ as the Son of God, he was baptized, calling on the name of the Lord.

VIII. Acts x. 44–48: "While Peter was yet speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell on them who heard the word. And they of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter; because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any one forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit as well as we? And he command-

ed them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

From the evidence here submitted, compared with Acts xv. 9, it is perfectly evident that none but *believers*, who were capable of glorifying God, received in this instance the Holy Spirit, and were baptized.

IX. Acts xi. 19–21: "Now they who were scattered abroad by the persecution that arose about Stephen, travelled as far as Phenice, and Cyprus, and Antioch, preaching the word to none but Jews. And some of them were men of Cyprus and Cyrene, who, when they were come to Antioch, spoke to the Greeks, preaching the Lord Jesus. And the hand of the Lord was with them: *and a great number believed, and turned to the Lord.*"

This passage is somewhat elliptical, being sufficiently explained by what precedes. But, even from this brief narrative, it is quite obvious that in Antioch, as well as in Jerusalem, Samaria, Cæsarea, etc., the Gospel was first preached to those who were capable of hearing and understanding it; and, secondly, that as many as gladly received the word, turned to the

Lord by submitting to all the requirements of the Gospel.

X. Acts xvi. 14, 15: "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, who worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened to attend to the things spoken by Paul. And when she was baptized and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us."

Some have inferred that there *may* have been infants in this household, and also in that of Cornelius (Acts x. 14); that of the jailer (Acts xvi. 31); and that of Stephanas (1 Cor. i. 16). But be it observed, that what is here required is not the evidence of *possibility*, nor even of *probability*, but of *absolute certainty*. For it is manifest, as we have seen, that the terms of the Commission are against infant baptism: so that, unless it can be shown clearly and unequivocally that the Apostles did baptize some infants, it follows, of necessity, that the law of the Commission must be taken in its plain and most obvious sense. But this never

can be done.* For of the household of Cornelius it is said that *they all feared the Lord* (Acts x. 2); of that of the jailer, that *they all believed in God* (Acts xvi. 34); and of the household of Stephanas, it is said that *they had devoted themselves to the service of the saints* (1 Cor. xvi. 15). So that the house of Lydia is really the only one concerning which there is any room for doubt. And even this doubt, if doubt it may be called, seems to wholly vanish when we find that in the fortieth verse of the same chapter (Acts xvi.), the members of this household are called "brethren." At all events, it can never be proved from this passage that an infant was ever baptized by the authority of Christ, or of His Apostles. And, consequently, we are still constrained to believe that the law of Christ, given in the Commission, has reference only to the baptism of believers.

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* "No express mention is made of infants in the command of Christ, which initiated this rite; and no distinct case of the baptism of infants is mentioned in the sacred narrative."—(*Hanna's Life of Christ*, vol. vi., p. 310.) In this concession of Dr. Hanna, concur nearly all of the most learned and pious pedobaptist writers

XI. Acts xvi. 29–34: "And calling for lights, he" (the jailer) "sprang in, and trembling fell down before Paul and Silas; and having brought them out said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house. *And they spoke to him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.* And taking them along, the same hour of the night, he washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his immediately. And having brought them into his house, he set food before them, *and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.*"

From this passage we learn—

1. That Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to the jailer, and to all that were in his house. And—

2. That they all believed before they were baptized.

XII. Acts xviii. 5–8: "And when Silas and Timothy were come from Macedonia, Paul was pressed in spirit, and testified to the Jews that Jesus is the Christ. And when they opposed themselves and blasphemed, he shook his

raiment and said to them, Your blood be on your own heads; I am clean; from henceforth I will go to the Gentiles. And he departed thence and entered into a certain man's house named Justus; one that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. *And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house. And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.*"

Here, again, we have the same order and succession of events:

1. The people hear the word of the Lord.
2. They believe it.
3. They are, by the authority of Christ, baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

From all these examples, then, it is very evident that the practice of the Apostles and primitive Evangelists was in perfect harmony with the law of Christ given in the Commission; that is, they first made disciples, and then they baptized them. And hence we are constrained to conclude that *infant baptism is*

*without any warrant, sanction, or authority, in the word of God.*

But it is argued that the Jewish Church was typical of the Christian Church; and as there were confessedly infants in the former, so also it is alleged there should be infants in the latter. This is the ground which is now occupied by the most pious and learned of the Protestant pedobaptists. And as it is in itself a plausible hypothesis, and supported also by many of the most illustrious Protestant Reformers, it is deserving of at least a very candid and impartial consideration.

I think, however, that the following remarks are quite sufficient to show that the conclusion is erroneous, and that the position is therefore wholly untenable. Observe, then—

I. *That the points of analogy between the type and the antitype are generally very few.* The resemblance is in all cases but partial. And hence, in reasoning on and from such matters, it is very necessary that great caution should be observed, lest peradventure we embrace in our conclusion what is wholly unwarranted by our premises. Adam, for instance, is

said to be a type of Christ (Rom. v. 14). But surely nothing could be more erroneous than to infer from this that Adam resembles Christ in every particular. It is true that they each sustain a peculiar relation to the entire human race, and also that their conduct has affected the entire race. But it is not true that their acts have affected the race in the same way or in the same degree. The conduct of the former brought a curse on the entire race; but the conduct of the latter has brought a great blessing on all, and especially on those who are of the household of faith: "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. xv. 22). "For as by one man's disobedience the many were made sinners; even so, by the obedience of the one, shall the many be made righteous" (Rom. v. 19).

II. *Before, therefore, it can be logically inferred, from the analogy that exists between the Jewish and Christian Churches, that infants may of right be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, it must be shown that infant membership is one of the points of resemblance that were designed*

*and preordained by the Divine Founder of these two institutions.* That it was God's intention that there should be *babes* in both, is of course conceded. But this is not enough. It must be further shown that these babes are of the same class with respect to their age, and their intellectual and moral developments. But, that this never can be done, is obvious from several considerations :

1. *From the nature and the necessity of the case.*

The covenant which God made with Abraham was twofold; each branch of it being also called a covenant. The first referred to Abraham's posterity according to the flesh; and the second to his posterity according to the Spirit. The members of the former, except those only who were proselyted, or bought with money, became such by a birth of flesh; and were, therefore, at the time of their initiation into the covenant, but babes in the kingdom of Nature. But the members of the latter, as it is now fully developed, under the personal reign of Christ, become such by a birth of water and of the Spirit; and must, therefore, be of suffi-

cient age and intelligence to understand the word of truth (John iii. 3–5).

All this will be made plain by the following passages:

(1.) Gen. xvii. 7: "And I will establish my covenant between me and thee, and thy *seed* after thee in their generations, for an everlasting covenant, to be a God to thee and to thy *seed* after thee." The plain and obvious meaning of this passage is, that all the children of Abraham were, *from the period of their birth and by virtue of their birth*, members of this covenant in its first intention; just as all the children of Adam are, by virtue of their birth, subjects of the Adamic covenant.

I know, some are of the opinion that the children of Abraham became members of this covenant by virtue of their circumcision on the eighth day after their birth.* But for this

* This opinion grew out of the assumption that circumcision is a type of baptism. But for this opinion there is no warrant in the Living Oracles. Circumcision under the Old Covenant was a type of the circumcision of the heart by the Holy Spirit under the New Covenant. (See "Scheme of Redemption," book

opinion there is not even the shadow of evidence in the whole Bible. On the contrary, it is quite evident, from the fourteenth verse of the same chapter (Genesis xvii.), that every child was from its birth regarded as a subject of the Abrahamic covenant, and as such was, for typical reasons, held responsible from the moment of its natural birth. For, otherwise, how could it be said with propriety, of the child that was uncircumcised after the eighth day, that it had *broken* God's covenant? Who but a subject of a covenant can be truthfully and properly said to break it?

(2.) Matt. iii. 9: "And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children to Abraham." From this, and many other like passages of Scripture, it is evident that the Jews all regarded themselves as subjects of the Abrahamic

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ii., part i., chap. iii., pp. 79–82, by the author.) And the natural birth of the child, under the Old Economy, was made typical, or rather emblematical, of the birth of water and of the Spirit, under the New Economy. (John i. 12, 13, and iii. 3–5.)

covenant, not by virtue of their circumcision, but in consequence of their birth. And this, within proper limitations, John does not deny. The common error of the Jews did not consist in their claiming to be in covenant with God by virtue of their descent from Abraham. This claim was just, and is often conceded in both the Old and the New Testament. But the Jews failed to perceive the twofold nature of the Abrahamic covenant; that it was in fact two covenants, respecting two families, and guaranteeing to each certain peculiar rights and privileges. And, failing in this, they claimed as members of the Old Covenant what be long properly and exclusively to the subjects of the New Covenant. This was the great and fundamental error into which the Jews had all fallen; and it is this that Christ and His Apostles, as well as John the Baptist, labored so much to correct. Even Nicodemus, the great teacher of Israel, had fallen into this error. He came to Jesus by night to learn more of Him respecting His mission as an ambassador from God, evidently presuming, however, that as a son of Abraham he was legally entitled to

participate in the peculiar rights and privileges of the Messiah's kingdom. But Christ knew his thoughts, and at once labored to correct his mistake. He tells him that his natural birth as a son of Abraham was wholly unavailing; and that every man, whether Jew or Gentile, must be born again before, as a citizen, he can enjoy the kingdom of God. This, of course, very greatly surprised Nicodemus; and he proceeded to inquire further into the possibility of this new birth, clearly showing that even he was trusting wholly in the flesh. But Christ immediately added, by way of explanation: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born of water, and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto you, *ye must be born again.*" (John iii. 5–7. For further proof and illustration of this matter, see also John i. 12, 13; Rom. ix. 6–8, etc.)

It is evident, therefore, that the subjects of the Old Covenant, save the few exceptions already named, were all made such, simply by

virtue of their natural birth; but that no one can now become a subject of the New Covenant, as the fully-developed constitution of the Church of Christ, without being born of water and of the Spirit. Most of the members of the Church, under the old Theocracy, became such without any knowledge on their part whatever. Their minds were perfectly destitute of even the most simple and elementary ideas. But not so with the members of the Church of Christ. They are all begotten by the Holy Spirit, *through the word of truth as the good seed of the kingdom.* So James clearly and unequivocally testifies in his letter to the brethren of the Twelve Tribes, that were scattered abroad. "Of His own will," says he, "He (God) begot us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures" (James i. 18). And so also Peter testifies, in his first Epistle to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia: "Being born again," he says, "not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever" (1 Peter i. 23.

See also Luke viii. 4–15; John vi. 44, 45; 1 Cor. iv. 14, 15, etc). *

* It is worthy of remark that the natural and the spiritual birth were at first both brought about by means of a long series of miracles. But now, so far as we know, they are both effected without a miracle, simply through the influence of such natural and providential agencies as God has Himself provided for this purpose. At all events, *no man can prove that any one is now begotten miraculously, either as a child of Adam or a child of God.*

I am aware that some good men entertain the opinion that God still creates out of nothing (*ex nihilo*) a new soul, or spirit, for every infant born of the human race; and that He does this just at the moment of its conception. They concede that the human body is propagated by natural generation; but they think that the spirit is an immediate creation from God. For the proof of this hypothesis, they rely on such passages of Scripture as Numbers xvi. 22, xxvii. 16; Job xii. 10; Ecclesiastes xii. 7; Isaiah lvii. 16; Zechariah xii. 1; and especially on Hebrews xii. 9, in which the writer says: "Furthermore, we have had fathers of our flesh who corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits and live?"

To some this evidence may at first seem plausible. But observe—

From these premises, then, it clearly follows that no one is now born again without the

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1. That throughout the Bible the word *flesh* is often used symbolically for whatever is *weak*, *depraved*, and *perishable*. Thus it is often put for the whole man, or for all mankind in their fallen and sinful state; as in Genesis vi. 12; Psalm lxxviii. 39; Isaiah xl. 5; lxvi. 23, 24; Joel ii. 28; John iii. 6, etc.

2. That the word spirit is in like manner often put as its antithesis, for whatever is *strong*, *holy*, and *incorruptible;* as in John iii. 6, iv. 24; Hebrews i. 7, etc.

3. That the object of the Apostle in Hebrews xii. 9, is not to speak of the origin of either the body or the spirit of man; but simply to draw a proper contrast between God and our earthly parents, with the view of more fully reconciling us to the Divine chastisements. For this purpose He reminds us that our earthly parents are like ourselves, *carnal*, *frail*, *depraved*, and *ever liable to err*. But, to show the infinite perfections of God, he reminds us that He is not only Spirit, but even *the Father of spirits*. And hence he argues that as God never errs, but, always corrects us for our good, we should patiently submit to His gracious chastisements and live. It seems to me, therefore, that this passage can never with propriety be quoted to sustain any theory, touching either the direct or the indirect crea-

word of God. But the word of God can have no power to change the heart and control the

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tion of the human spirit. And this, I think, is equally true of all the other passages above referred to. They prove nothing in favor of either Creationism or Traducianism.

But that our spirits, as well as our bodies, are derived directly from our parents *by natural generation*, is rendered at least very probable from the following considerations:

1. From the testimony of Moses given in Genesis i. 26, where he says: "And God said, Let us make man in our image; and let *them* have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." Here the word *man* seems to be put for the whole species. And the language seems to imply that the whole species was created and vested in Adam on the sixth day, and by him to be propagated, as other species of the animal kingdom, by the laws of natural generation.

2. Because it seems to be a law of the Divine economy, illustrated in the work of creation, providence, and redemption, to work by means, or through the agency and instrumentality of second causes, as far as possible.

3. Because man's identity consists not in his material

life, unless it be first understood. "He," says Christ, "that receiveth seed into the good

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but in his spiritual essence. And hence it would seem that, to deny the transmission of the soul, by the laws of natural generation, is virtually to deny the unity of the species.

4. Because children resemble their parents in their *spiritual* as well as in their *physical* peculiarities.

5. Because the Bible everywhere represents *us* as the children and descendants of Adam. But it is not the body that constitutes the man proper. It is but the house, or tabernacle, in which the spirit dwells (2 Cor. v. 1).

6. Because it would be inconsistent with the known character and economy of God to place a pure and immortal spirit in a body so depraved and defiled as that which we receive from our sinful parents. God has a place for every thing; and to every thing He assigns its own proper place. And hence, when Judas died, "he went to his own place" (Acts i. 25); and when Lazarus died he was carried by angels into Abraham's bosom (Luke xvi. 22); so also when Adam was created, he was placed in Eden (Gen. ii. 15).

7. Because this hypothesis is more consistent with such passages of Scripture as Romans v. 12, 18, 19; Ephesians ii. 3, etc., than is the doctrine of an immediate creation.

ground, is he that heareth the word and understandeth it; who also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some a hundred fold, some sixty, and some thirty" (Matt. xiii. 23). But to understand the word requires a degree of intellectual, moral, and religious development and intelligence, such as no child of Abraham ever had, either at the time of its birth or of its circumcision. And hence it follows of necessity, from the nature of the case, that the babes of the Jewish Church were very different, in point of intellectual, moral, and religious character and development, from those who are the legitimate babes of the Church of Christ.

2. *This may also be still further proved by the direct testimony of the Holy Spirit.* This is given with sufficient fulness in the following brief extract from the prophecy of Jeremiah: "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I

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For these reasons I am inclined to think that the natural birth is brought about according to natural laws, and by means of natural and providential causes. And if so, this may furnish some analogical evidence that the spiritual or second birth is effected in like manner, without any immediate miraculous agency.

will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers, in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they broke, though I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel: After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people. *And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord; for all shall know me from the least of them to the greatest of them, saith the Lord.* For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jer. xxxi. 31–34. See also Heb. viii. 8–12.)*

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* The reader will observe that the word *covenant* is used here, not in the sense of a *promise* merely, as in Gal. iii. 17, but in its more common and comprehensive sense, as *the constitution of the Church or kingdom of God.* The two promises made to Abraham, respecting his two families, were synchronous, dating as far

When God called the Israelites out of Egypt, He gave them a covenant, with the assurance that if they would faithfully observe and keep it, they would all be happy and prosperous. "The man" said He, "that doeth these things, shall live by them" (Rom. x. 5, and Gal. iii. 12). But it very soon became manifest that, according to the terms and conditions of that covenant, no flesh could be justified. The people all repeatedly transgressed its requirements, and thus brought about and sealed their own condemnation. And hence it was that God graciously promised, by His servant Jeremiah, that the days would come when He would make a *new*

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back as the year 1921 B. C. In 1491 B. C., the promise respecting his natural posterity was made the basis of the Sinaitic Covenant; and, as then developed, it became the constitution of the Jewish Church, or national Theocracy. But it was not till the year A. D. 34, that the other promise made to Abraham, respecting the family of the faithful, was in like manner fully developed and made the constitution of the Church of Christ. In this sense it is, therefore, a *new covenant*, compared with the Sinaitic Covenant, though each of them had as its basis a promise that was made to Abraham before he left Ur of Chaldea.

*covenant* with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. And He says, moreover, that it would not be according to the Old Sinaitic Covenant, but that it would differ with and from it in the following particulars:

(1.) *The New Covenant would be faultless, whereas the Old Covenant was faulty* (Heb. viii. 7, 8). The Holy Spirit here, of course, speaks relatively. The Old Covenant was, in one sense, just as perfect as the New; that is, it was perfectly adapted to the end for which it was designed. But it never did, and never could, either justify, or sanctify, or save any one. And it is simply with reference to these ends and purposes that it is said to be faulty. God often addresses men according to their own conceptions of things. (See, for instance, Matt. xix. 17; John i. 21, etc.)

(2.) *The Old Covenant was written on stone and parchment; but the New was to be written on the understanding and the heart;* and hence it would of course be far more efficacious in forming the character and controlling the wills and lives of the people than the Old Covenant. It is of but little use that the truth of God is

written on marble, paper, or parchment, unless it is also written on our hearts.

(3.) *The subjects of the Old Covenant were not all necessarily pious; but all the subjects of the New Covenant must, of necessity, take Jehovah to be their God* (Heb. viii. 10). Many of the natural posterity of Abraham as they grew up believed in God, and became members also of the family of the faithful, and subjects of the embryonic or imperfectly-developed covenant concerning Christ. For, the two promises relating to the two families were given to Abraham at the same time, and coexisted as parts of the same general arrangement down to the end of the patriarchal age. And even when that which related only to the family of Abraham according to the flesh was finally and fully developed into a national covenant at Mount Sinai—even then that which related particularly and exclusively to the family of the faithful, was still associated with it and supported by it; though all the while as distinct from it as the vine is from the oak which supports it. For, says Paul, "The law is not of faith" (Gal. iii. 12). And hence it was

that many were subjects of the Old Covenant who were never, like Abraham, begotten by the Holy Spirit. But no one can really be a subject of the New Covenant, and a member of the Church of Christ, who has not been born again (John iii. 3).

(4.) *Most of the subjects of the Old Covenant were, as we have seen, introduced into it by a birth of flesh; and they had of course to learn afterward even the name and the existence of God. But all the subjects of the New Covenant enter into it and become members of the Church of Christ on the confession of their faith. And hence they must all, from at least the period of their new birth, know the Lord, even from the greatest to the least of them* (v. 11).

I am aware that this declaration (Heb. viii. 11) is by many referred to the whole human race. But in this sense it never was true and never can be true. It clearly refers, as is evident from the context, simply and exclusively to the members of the New Covenant, every one of whom must know the Lord, from the least of them even to the greatest of them. This, then, marks a contrast between the sub-

jects of the Old and the New Covenant which forever nullifies the claims of infant baptism.

(5.) *There was nothing in the Old Covenant that could really take away sins. And hence all the sins of the people were again remembered every year on the Day of Atonement. But under the New Covenant, the sins of God's children are remembered no more* (v. 12).

Under the Old Covenant, there was a lamb offered every morning, and also every evening, for the sins of the people. And besides these and the many annual offerings of the three great national festivals, there were also offered special weekly and monthly sacrifices. But nevertheless on the Day of Atonement (tenth day of the month Tishri) all the sins of the year were again called into remembrance. (See Leviticus xvi.) But it is not so under the more free and gracious economy of the New Covenant. The blood of Christ procures full and final pardon for all who comply with the terms and conditions of this covenant. And hence, on the day of judgment, the faithful will be treated as if they had never sinned (Heb. x. 1–8).

(6.) *The Old Covenant was abolished when Christ was crucified* (Eph. ii. 14–17; Col. ii. 14, etc); *but the New Covenant will continue in force while time endures* (v. 13. Compare also Dan. ii. 44; Heb. xii. 28; 1 Pet. v. 12, etc.).

Many other passages of Scripture might be cited to the same effect; but this one from Jeremiah is, I think, quite sufficient for our present purpose. That none but *believers in Christ* should be baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, is abundantly evident from each and all of the following considerations:

1. From the terms of the Commission itself.

2. From the labors of the Apostles and primitive Evangelists.

3. From the distinctive nature and design of the New Covenant; and—

4. From the direct testimony of the Holy Spirit.

## SECTION III.

"*Into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*"

What is the meaning of this? That the Greek preposition *eis*, in this connection, means *into*, and not *in*, as we have it in our common English version, is, I think, no longer a debatable question. Dean Alford says: "It is unfortunate again, here, that our English Bibles do not give us the proper force of this *eis*. It should have been *into* (as in Gal. iii. 27, al.), both here and in 1 Cor. x. 2, and wherever the expression is used." And to the same effect testify nearly all, if not quite all, of the most able and learned writers on the Commission. But conceding this, as well as the aforesaid meaning of the word *baptize* (*immerse*), and still the question occurs, What is the full and exact import of this clause? What did Christ mean when he said to his Apostles: "Immerse the disciples into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit?"

Perhaps a few remarks on the use of the word *name*, as it occurs in the Holy Scriptures, may serve to simplify in some measure the real construction and import of this passage. In the Hebrew and Hellenistic dialects, the word *name* often implies more than a mere abstract designation of the person represented. *Very frequently it means the person himself, as he is revealed to us in the Scriptures.* Thus, for instance, in the Old Testament, the name of God is very often equivalent to God Himself, as He is therein revealed to us. This is evident from such examples as the following:

1. Exod. iii. 13, 14: "And Moses said unto God, Behold when I come unto the children of Israel, and shall say unto them, The God of your fathers hath sent me unto you; and they will say unto me, *What is his name?* what shall I say to them? And God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM. And he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." Here the word *name* evidently means God Himself, revealed to the Israelites as the self-existent and immutable Deity; and hence as the ever-

living and covenant-keeping God. The time had now come when God was about to fulfil many of His promises made to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and thus to give a fuller significance to the name Jehovah, than any of the fathers had hitherto attached to it. (See also Exod. vi. 3.)

2. Deut. xii. 5: "But unto the place which the Lord your God shall choose out of all the tribes to put His *name* there, even unto His habitation shall ye seek, and thither shalt thou come." Here, again, the phrase "to put His name," is equivalent to *reveal Himself.* There was the place of God's habitation; there was His presence; and there the Hebrews dwelt as under the shadow of the Almighty.

3. Isa. l. 10: "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of His servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? *Let him trust in the name of the Lord,* and stay upon his God." This is an instance of synonymous parallelism, in which the phrase, "to trust in the name of the Lord," is made equivalent to staying upon God, or

trusting in God Himself as He is revealed in the Holy Oracles.

In like manner the name of Christ is often put for Christ Himself, as He is revealed to us in the New Testament. This is obvious from the following examples:

1. John i. 12: "But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God, even to them that *believe on His name.*" That is, believe on Himself, as the revealed Son of God. (See also 1 John v. 13.)

2. Acts xix. 17: "And this was known to all the Jews, and Greeks also, dwelling at Ephesus. And fear fell on them all; *and the name of the Lord Jesus was magnified.*" That is, the Lord Jesus Himself, as God, revealed in the flesh, was magnified.

This, then, is manifestly the meaning of the word *name* as it occurs in the Commission. It is in the singular number, and does not mean any particular title or literary designation of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, taken either separately or conjointly; but it means simply the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit themselves, revealed to

in the Holy Bible, as the one eternal and immutable *Elohcem Jehovah;* the creator, preserver, and upholder of all things; to whom be honor and glory forever and ever. Amen.

The passage may, therefore, without violence, be rendered into the English idiom as follows: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, immersing them into the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; the one God revealed in the Holy Scriptures."

But still the question occurs, What does this mean? The construction is now somewhat simplified, but the meaning of the passage is still quite obscure. And this obscurity arises not from any want of clearness and precision in the terms employed. These are all plain and well defined in the Living Oracles. But there is in this passage a depth and comprehensiveness of meaning which I am inclined to think far transcends the utmost grasp of the human intellect. To be immersed into the infinite fulness of the Deity! What does it mean?

Without attempting to exhaust the full meaning of this most profound and comprehen-

sive oracle, I will endeavor to indicate, as briefly as I can, some of the lessons which I think its Divine Author intended to set forth and express by it and through it. And—

I. *It is evidently implied in this passage that in our baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, a very important change takes place in our relations.* The particle *into* clearly indicates this, and the nature of the case also requires it. The relation between man and his Creator was at first very near and very intimate. Adam lived in God, breathed in God, and derived all his spiritual life from God. But when sin entered into the world, then death, in its widest and most comprehensive sense, also came into it. Man was then separated from his Maker; and for four thousand years the whole world, save only the few who through faith were renewed by the Holy Spirit, and thus reunited to God, were the willing slaves of sin and Satan. Indeed, so very general was the dominion of Satan over mankind, that Christ Himself calls him repeatedly "the Prince of this world." (See John xii. 31;

xiv. 30; and xvi. 11.) And John says: "We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in the Evil One" (1 John v. 19. See also Eph. ii. 2, and 2 Tim. ii. 26).

But for this purpose was the Son of God manifested that He might destroy the works of the devil" (1 John iii. 8). For this purpose He not only died and rose again, but was also crowned King of kings and Lord of lords. For this purpose He set up His kingdom on earth, and instructed His Apostles to introduce into it all true believers by immersing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Henceforth their relations are all changed. In the act of their baptism, they voluntarily renounce all connection with Satan and his emissaries, and at the same time they vow eternal allegiance to God through Christ as their sovereign Lord and Master.* God is

* I know it is believed by many that this change of relationship takes place previous to our baptism, just as soon as we believe with all our heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. And that this is *partially* true must, I think, be conceded. The relations of the unbaptized believer are not strictly identical with

now their Father; Christ is their Saviour, their elder Brother, and their Redeemer; the Holy

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those of the infidel. The new life begotten in the soul affects to some extent both the state and the relationship of the believer (Acts xv. 9). But that the change is consummated in baptism seems evident—

1. From the terms of the Commission itself, as well as from many other passages of the Holy Scriptures. For, if the change is effected wholly by faith before baptism, then, why did Christ command His Apostles to baptize believers *into* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit? And why, moreover, did Paul say to the Galatians, "As many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ?" (Gal. iii. 27.)

I know it is said also, that we believe *into* (*eis*) Christ. (See John i. 12; iii. 15, 16, etc.) But when do we believe into Christ? At what particular stage or epoch of our new life does faith put us into Him? The Mississippi River carries steamboats. But where? At its source? No; but after it has united with sundry other streams. And just so it is with respect to our faith. It, too, is a stream; a living stream which runs through our whole Christian life, and gives character to every thought, word, and action. And hence, if we would understand aright the expression, "*believe into Christ*," we must first learn, from the testimony of the

Spirit is their Advocate and Comforter; holy angels are their ministering servants; and the

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Holy Spirit, at what particular stage of this river of life we are in fact introduced into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. But this we have already learned. From the passages cited, we learn that faith, in connection with repentance, confession, love, prayer, and baptism, puts us into this new and holy relation. Faith alone is not of itself sufficient to effect this change; nor is baptism alone; nor repentance alone; nor prayer alone; nor even love alone. But faith, from its very conception, begets within us a strong and abiding *tendency* to this change of relationship; and, in the act of baptism, the change itself is fully consummated through the cleansing influence of the blood of Christ, and the circumcision of the heart by the Holy Spirit. (See "*Scheme of Redemption*," pp. 444–458, by the author.)

2. This important fact may be still further illustrated by the typical history of the Israelites. Their faith in God, and in Moses as His servant, effected some change in their relations, even before their departure from Rameses. But, nevertheless, it was not till they entered the Red Sea that they were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea (1 Cor. x. 2). And till then they were still on the enemy's soil, and were severely threatened and annoyed by them. But from the moment that

earth is no longer theirs by usurpation, but by and through the blood-bought rights of the everlasting covenant of God's grace, through which they can also now read their titles clear to mansions in the skies.

But notice, if you please, the completeness and thoroughness of this change of relationship. It is not a partial change, such as might be indicated by pouring or sprinkling a little water on the face of the penitent believer. By no means. But it is such a change as is indicated by the immersion of the whole man—his body, soul, and spirit—into the fulness of Him that filleth all in all; and of which the immersion in water is but the outward symbol! The intellect, the heart, the will, as well as the body,

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they were immersed into Moses as their leader, they were completely and forever separated from Pharaoh and his martial host. And just so it is with the Christian. His faith in God always changes his heart (Acts xv. 9); and his love strongly inclines him to Christ, from the moment that he first believes in Him. But it is in the ordinancef o baptism that, through faith and repentance, prayer and love, he puts on Christ, and henceforth follows Him as his leader.

are all baptized into the Deity as He is revealed to us in the person of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. No part or portion of the entire man is left under the will and government of the Evil One; but henceforth all is given up to Christ as our Sovereign Lord and Redeemer.

How very beautiful, then, and how profoundly significant, is the ordinance of baptism when viewed from this stand-point, and contemplated in this light! By it, and through it, we are not only translated from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God's dear Son (Col. i. 13); but, still more, we are translated from Satan himself into God! from the power, dominion, cunning, craft, malice, and damning influences of him who ever works in the children of disobedience, into the immeasurably profound and infinite depths of the Divinity itself! Surely such a change should inspire every one with solemn awe, and at the same time fill the soul of the humble, penitent, and obedient believer with a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.

II. *It implies also a change of state.* This

is, of course, very nearly and intimately connected with the change that is effected in our relations. But it implies something more than this. It means that there is a state immediately resulting from and growing out of our new relations which is vastly different from our previous state under the influence of our former relations. This new state may be described—

1. *As a state of holiness.* The past sins of the baptized believer are all washed away through the atoning, purifying, and sanctifying blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is evident from the following passages:

(1.) Mark xvi. 16: "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved." That is, he shall be saved from the guilt of sin, and also from the power and dominion of sin. "Sin shall not have dominion over you, for ye are not under law, but under grace" (Rom. vi. 14). "Knowing this also that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin" (Rom. vi. 6).*

* This does not mean that sin (by which term the Apostle here means our depravity or sinfulness) is wholly

(2.) Acts ii. 38: "Then Peter said unto them, Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, *for the remission of sins;* and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." No language, it seems to me, could more clearly indicate and express a change from a state of sinfulness to a state of holiness, than does this reply of the Apostle Peter to the inquiring Pentecostian converts. It is made as plain as language can make it, that both repentance and baptism were required of these persons in order to the forgiveness of their sins through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ; for it is this, of course, that cleanses from all sin (1 John i. 7).

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destroyed. Crucifixion does not imply annihilation. But it does imply a change of existing relations; a destruction of the physical and outward organization; and a consequent diminution of the powers and influences of the being crucified. The broken and subdued spirit of sin still remains to some extent within us. But its body is destroyed; its power is taken away; it has no longer *dominion over us;* and we cannot now sin wilfully and habitually, as we formerly did, because we are born of God (1 John iii. 9).

(3.) Acts xxii. 16: "And now, why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and *wash away thy sins*, calling on the name of the Lord." Here, the washing of baptism is, of course, but an outward sign and symbol of the simultaneous inward purification of the soul, through the atoning and sanctifying influence of the blood of Jesus. For, if the washing of water serves to purify our flesh, "How much more shall the blood of Christ, who, through the Eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, purge (our) conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. ix. 14).

(4.) Rom. vi. 1–4: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we who *are dead to sin live any longer therein?* Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him by baptism into death; that, like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Nothing could be more clear and direct than this testimony of the Apostle. In the preced-

ing chapter he had shown the marvellous and superabounding fulness of God's gracious scheme of redemption: first, as a means of cancelling unconditionally all the effects and consequences of the Adamic transgression; and, secondly, as a means of blotting out on given conditions the personal sins of every true believer. But in this, the objecting Jew thinks there is too much grace. To him it seems more like a license to sin, than as a means of restraining and purifying the sinner. And he therefore very adroitly asks the question, "If the case is just as you represent it, Paul, should we not rather continue in sin that grace may abound? Should we not continue to sin more and more in order that grace may abound more and more?" To which the Apostle very conclusively and forcibly replies: "Certainly not; for how can we who have died to sin, live any longer in it? How can we live in that from which we have been separated?"

But, perceiving that just here many would be ready to ask the question, When were we separated from our sins, and consecrated to a life of holiness?—perceiving this, he im-

mediately proceeds to answer the question. Why, says he, do you not know that so many of us as were baptized into Christ, were baptized into His death? Do you not know that, when we were by His authority baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we were at the same time by the Divine arrangement baptized into the death of Christ, and placed under all the healing, cleansing, and purifying influences of His blood? And, as we were then symbolically buried with Him by baptism into death, so also we were, in and through the same ordinance, by God's appointment, raised up with Him in a state of holiness to walk in newness of life. For "If any man be *in Christ*, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; and behold all things are become new" (2 Cor. v. 17). And hence it is that the Scriptures abound in exhortations to every Christian to live in holiness, and to walk in harmony with the new state into which he was immersed by the authority of the Lord Jesus. (See, for instance, Rom. vi. 12–14, and viii. 12–17.)

2. *It may be considered as a state of happi-*

*ness.* There is, indeed, an essential connection between holiness and happiness. Constituted as we now are under the government of God, it is simply impossible that the unholy man can be a happy man; or that one who is holy can be permanently unhappy. It is a great mistake to suppose that our happiness depends simply, or even chiefly, on our external circumstances. Heaven is a state as well as a place. And there may be, and no doubt often is, a heaven or a hell within us, as well as without and around us.

But if the heart is pure, then all is well. For Christ says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This is enough; we can ask nothing more. To be with God, and to be like God, is the consummation of all blessedness. But the heart of the believer is purified, as we have seen, by the blood of Christ in the act of baptism. And as soon as this takes place, the Holy Spirit takes up its abode in the renewed heart, filling it with "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance." And hence it is that every true child of God,

who has put on Christ by baptism, may, like the eunuch, "go on his way rejoicing."

3. *It is also a state free from all possible external danger, so long as we faithfully walk in it.* "The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it, and is safe" (Prov. xviii. 10). For "if God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea, rather that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, and who also maketh intercession for us. Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? (As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.) Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor

powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 31–39).

How immeasurably great, then, are the blessings and benefits that God has conferred on those who have been immersed into Him, and who continue to walk in Him, according to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus! How very near, dear, and sacred, are the relations which every Christian sustains to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit! May God, in His infinite mercy, give us all grace to comprehend these things as we should; and to walk worthy of the high and holy calling whereby we have been called from darkness to light, and from the power and dominion of Satan into the kingdom and fellowship of His own dear Son!

"Gracious Saviour, we adore Thee;
Purchased by Thy precious blood,
We present ourselves before Thee,
Now to walk the narrow road;
Saviour, guide us—
Guide us to our heavenly home."

## CHAPTER III.

"*Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you.*"

This, of course, implies that the disciples are to be instructed in all things pertaining to life and godliness. They are now supposed to be believers in Christ; to have made the good Confession; and to have been baptized, by the authority of Christ, into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. But, nevertheless, they still need to be instructed in relation to their duties, honors, privileges, birthrights, and obligations, as the redeemed sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. The disciples of Christ are all called into His kingdom to work; to assist in every way that they possibly can both to edify the Church and to convert the world. But, before they can do this properly, they must themselves be well instructed in the laws, ordinances, rights, privi-

leges, and obligations of the kingdom of heaven. And hence it seems that it was always an implied purpose of God that the followers of Christ should be thoroughly instructed in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, and have an infallible directory of both faith and practice. This may be inferred from several considerations:

I. *From the typical history of the Israelites.* When God called His people out of Egypt, He gave them a perfect guide. The symbol of His presence went before them as a pillar of cloud to lead them on their journey by day, and as a pillar of fire to guide them by night. Had they faithfully followed this as their divinely-appointed guide, it would have led them safely throughout all their wanderings to the land of rest that was prepared for them. But this they were unwilling to do. They were not willing to walk by faith, and preferred to walk by sight. And hence they rebelled against Moses, and set at naught the counsel of God. This was at first their misfortune, and it finally proved to be their ruin. After bearing with them for a long time, God at

length swore in His wrath that they should never enter into His rest (Heb. iii. 7–19).

Now these things were *types;* and they were written for our instruction (1 Cor. x. 1–12). They are but the shadows of the more solemn and impressive events and realities of our Christian pilgrimage. And they teach us as plainly as could a voice from heaven, that it was never God's purpose to leave His people without a perfect guide—a guide of His own creation and appointment. As the pillar of the cloud was to the Israelites, so is the word of the Lord to the followers of Christ. We have but to keep our eye on it, and follow without reserve wherever it may lead us, and then all will be well. It may conduct us, as the cloud did the Israelites, "through a great and terrible wilderness," full of dangers and full of snares. But no matter. If we follow it faithfully, as did Joshua and Caleb the pillar of the cloud, it will just as certainly bring us to the land of rest that remains for the people of God. There, there is fulness of joy; and there, there are pleasures for evermore. "A hope so great, then, and so divine, may trials well endure."

II. *This may also be proved and further illustrated by the prophecies of the Old Testament.* Isaiah, for instance, looking down through the vista of future ages, saw by the spirit of inspiration the glorious effects and influences of Christ's mediatorial reign on the earth. He saw on all hands evidences of light, and life, and salvation. And, among other things, he saw the highway of holiness—a way that was so plain, and so direct, that even the most ignorant travellers on it were in no danger of being lost. True, indeed, they were all in the midst of a thousand philosophical mysteries, which even the most gifted and enlightened of their fellow-travellers were unable to explain. Every star in their firmament was a mystery, and so also was every pebble beneath their feet. But, nevertheless, the man that pressed forward, resolved by the grace of God to reach and enter the pearly gates of the everlasting Zion, had no difficulty in doing so. (See Isaiah xxxv.)

Now, just so it is in the kingdom of Christ. The man who will now stop on his way to inquire into all the mysteries of redemption, will

never make much progress in the divine life. He will hear the cry of the coming bridegroom, and the door will be forever shut, before he will be able to explain on philosophical principles even the mysteries of man's creation and his fall, not to speak of the mysteries of the incarnation, the atonement, the new birth, the resurrection from the dead, and the life everlasting. On these and a thousand other matters pertaining to man's recovery from sin and death, even the archangel may yet be in doubt and uncertainty. Such knowledge is in many points too high for us; too vast and too profound for our poor, weak, and finite capacities. But, nevertheless, the man who receives the Bible as the word of God, and who humbly, confidingly, and prayerfully follows its instructions, will have but little difficulty in understanding his whole duty and persevering to the end in the way of holiness. This is just as certain as that Isaiah spoke by the spirit of inspiration.

III. *It is still further evident from the instructions of Christ to His Apostles as given in the Commission.* "Go," said He to them, "and

make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; *teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you.*" That in this saying Christ has reference to all the duties of life, is obvious from the manner in which it was understood by the Apostles. In their instructions to baptized believers, they embrace every thing which is really essential to a life of piety and usefulness. The duty of every disciple to his God, to himself, to his family, to the Church, to the state, and to the world, is marked out so fully and so variously, that it would really be difficult to conceive how any directory of moral and religious duty could be made more perfect and complete than that which is given in the New Testament. To the strictly honest and unprejudiced believer, who trembles at the word of the Lord, and whose only inquiry is, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" there is really no difficulty in the way. The path of duty is as plainly marked out in the New Testament, as the way of holiness was in the vision of Isaiah, or as the line of march was indicated to the

Israelites by the pillar of cloud which led them by day, and the pillar of fire by night.

The troubles of the way are therefore chiefly objects and obstacles of our own creation; and they are usually quite as great in the way of the learned as they are in the way of the unlearned. One man, through the vanity of his mind, and the pride of philosophy, or the prejudices of a false education, so perverts the Scriptures as to make them correspond with one theory; another, with equal violence, makes them harmonize with something else; and a third, with still something else. And hence it is that when we come together to worship God, and to cooperate with one another for the edification of the Church, and the conversion of the world, there is often a want of harmony among us. One man sees every thing through the light and medium of Calvinism; another, through Arminianism; another, through Mysticism; and still another, through Rationalism, or some other conceived system of religious philosophy. Nor is this all. The evil does not stop here. These divisions and dissensions lead to skepticism. In the estimation of many,

the word of God is divested in whole or in part of its proper authority; and, just so far, it of course ceases to be the guide of life.

It seems to me, therefore, that a practical recognition of a few plain and simple rules, touching the *authority*, *use*, and *proper application* of the word of God as the guide of life, would go far to correct existing evils, and to restore to the Church her primitive faith and practice. And I therefore now, very respectfully, submit the following for the consideration of all who are earnestly laboring to promote the unity, harmony, peace, increase, and prosperity of Zion: *

Rule I.— *We should carefully observe, both in letter and in spirit, every specific precept which Christ has given to us either directly or through His inspired Apostles.* To do otherwise is to rebel against Christ, and to act inconsistently with our Christian profession. God said to the people through Moses, "A prophet

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* For a discussion of the rules and principles of interpretation, see "*Reason and Revelation*," Part v., revised edition, by the author.

shall the Lord your God raise up unto you of your brethren like unto me; him shall ye hear in all things whatsoever he shall say unto you. And it shall come to pass that every soul who will not hear that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people" (Acts iii. 22, 23). God did raise up that Prophet; and in the presence of Moses and Elijah, on the mount of transfiguration, He said to Peter, James, and John, and through them to all Christians, and even to every individual under heaven, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased: HEAR YE HIM" (Matt. xvii. 5). To the same effect is also the testimony of Jesus Himself given in the Commission. "All authority," says He, "is given to me in heaven and on the earth. Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you."

We have professed to believe all this. And by our baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, we have solemnly vowed that we will submit to it;

that henceforth the will of Christ shall be our will, and that His laws shall be to us the guide of our lives. This much we have all solemnly promised to do, who have put on Christ. But have we done it? Have we in all cases acted consistently with our profession? Have we observed in letter and in spirit every specific "*Thus saith the Lord*," that is given for our instruction and guidance under the New Covenant? Let us inquire—

1. In Matt. xviii. 15–17, the following very specific directions are given to all the followers of Christ, respecting the treatment of private offences: "Moreover, if thy brother trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone. If he hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother. But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established. And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: and if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as a heathen man and a publican."

Nothing could be more plain and specific

than these instructions; nothing more *authoritative.* But how many of the disciples of Christ strictly observe and follow them? Reader, what say you? Have *you* strictly followed these plain and simple directions of the Lord Jesus; or have you, with the multitude, been led by the spirit of Antichrist? "Why call ye me, Lord, Lord," says Christ to His disciples, "and do not the things which I say?" (Luke vi. 46.)

2. In Rom. xiii. 8, the Holy Spirit says to every disciple, "Owe no man any thing, but to love one another." How many of the professed followers of Christ live in harmony with this precept?

3. In 1 Cor. v. 11, we have given the following specific instructions concerning the proper treatment of one who had been lawfully excluded from the Church: "But now I (Paul) have written to you not to keep company—if any man that is called a brother be a fornicator, or covetous, or an idolater, or a railer, or a drunkard, or an extortioner—with such a one, no not to eat." How many Christians strictly observe and execute this law of Christ? And

how many nullify it by their unlawful intercourse and unhallowed sympathy with such public offenders? "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

4. In Matt. v. 44, our Lord Himself says to all His followers: "Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you; do good to them that hate you; and pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." But how many of them even honestly and earnestly *endeavor* to do this? How, then, will they reply to our Lord's interrogatory, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

I might very greatly multiply such cases. But the examples given are quite sufficient to show that the spirit of Antichrist is still abroad in the Church; and that thousands of those who profess to be the disciples of Christ, are still following their own lusts, and passions, and appetites, with far more regularity and consistency than they are following the specific precepts of the Lord Jesus. "For many walk of whom I have told you often, and now tell you even weeping, that they are the enemies of the Cross of Christ; whose end is destruction;

whose god is their belly; and whose glory is their shame; who mind earthly things."

Rule II.—*We should observe and respect, as of equal authority with a positive precept, every Apostolic precedent illustrative of the laws of Christ.* It is generally much easier to teach, especially the young and the uneducated, by example than by precept. And hence it has pleased God to illustrate the laws and principles of the kingdom of heaven by a series of Apostolic acts, which serve to make them all so very plain that even a child may ordinarily understand them. Most generally the law or precept is itself first stated; and then it is historically illustrated. But sometimes the law is indicated as well as illustrated by the practice of the primitive churches, under the instructions and directions of the Apostles and the inspired evangelists.

A noted instance of this kind is the law in relation to the sanctification of the Lord's-day. This is nowhere formally stated like the law of the Sabbath in the Old Testament. But, in Acts xx. 7, we read that, "on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to

break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and he continued his speech till midnight." From this example we learn that it was the *custom* of the brethren at Troas, and, of course, of all the other churches of the saints, to come together on the first day of the week to break bread, in commemoration of the Lord's death. For Paul arrived at Troas on the previous Monday, and though he was much pressed for time, being anxious to go up to Jerusalem as soon as possible, he nevertheless saw fit to wait at Troas for nearly one week, in order that he might be present at the *regular meeting of the brethren on the following Lord's-day*, having, no doubt, matters of very great importance to lay before them.

The same important lesson may also be learned from the practice of the churches of Corinth and Galatia. In 1 Cor. xvi. 1, 2, Paul says to the brethren of Corinth: "Now concerning the collection which is for the saints, as I ordered the churches of Galatia so also do ye. *On the first day of every week*, let each of you lay somewhat by itself, according as he may have prospered, putting it into

the treasury (of the church); that there may be no collections when I come."

These examples show very clearly and conclusively that it was the practice of the primitive churches, under the guidance and instruction of the Apostles and Prophets, to meet on every first day of the week, for the celebration of the Lord's death and resurrection, and other religious purposes. And hence it follows, apart from every other consideration, that it is now the solemn duty of all Christians to sanctify wholly to the Lord the first day of every week. No positive precept could possibly add to the sacredness of this day, or serve in any way to make its sanctification a matter of more perpetual and binding obligation.*

Great caution is, however, often necessary in applying this rule. The given example may not unfrequently be in some way connected with several laws; some of which may be of binding obligation and some not. Paul, for in-

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* For a fuller discussion of this interesting question, see "*Scheme of Redemption*," book iii., part ii., chapter vi., by the author.

stance. circumcised Timothy, "*on account of the Jews who were in those quarters;* for they all knew that his father was a Greek" (Acts xvi. 3). Now, to some persons it might at first seem as if Paul by this act intended to ratify and indorse, as of still binding obligation, the law of circumcision given in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis. But surely nothing else could be further from his purpose. For, in writing to the Galatians, he says: "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision; but a new creature" (Gal. vi. 15). And, in his letter to the Philippians, he says: "We are the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. iii. 3). And to his Roman brethren he says: "For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh. But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God" (Rom. ii. 28, 29). And finally, in his first letter to the church of Corinth, he says: "But as God hath

distributed to every man, as the Lord hath called every one, so let him walk. And so I ordain in all the churches. Is any man called, being circumcised? let him not become uncircumcised. Is any called in uncircumcision? let him not be circumcised. Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but the keeping of the commandments of God" (1 Cor. vii. 17–19).

It was not then to indorse, as of still binding obligation, the Old Covenant of circumcision; but it was "on account of the Jews who were in those parts, that Paul did as he did in this extraordinary case. It was in compliance with that general law of Christian benevolence, which requires us *to become all things to all men, so far as the law of Christ will permit, in order that we may gain their hearts, and save the souls of as many of them as we possibly can.* "For," says Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians, "while free from all men, I made myself a bond-servant for all, that I might win the more. And to the Jews, I became as a Jew, that I might win the Jews; to those under law, as under

law (though not myself under law), that I might win those under law; to those without law, as without law (not being without a law of God, but in the bond of Christ's law), that I might win those without law; to the weak, I became weak, that I might win the weak. To all men, I have become all things, that I might by all means save some" (1 Cor. ix. 19–23). The circumcision of Timothy must not therefore be referred to the law of circumcision; but to the law of Divine adaptation and Christian benevolence.

Rule III.—*We should carefully observe every thing that is embraced in the general laws that are given to us by Christ and His Apostles; and also whatever else may follow as a necessary consequence from any and all their instructions, whether specific or generic.*

The duties of the Christian life are very numerous. And hence, instead of filling many volumes, as He might have done, with specific precepts for our guidance and instruction, God has most wisely and benevolently embraced all our duties and obligations under a few general laws; giving us, at the same time, such mo-

tives, practical illustrations, and minute details, as He Himself in His infinite wisdom and benevolence foresaw would be necessary for the instruction, government, and welfare of all. For instance, it is nowhere directly and specifically commanded in the Holy Scriptures, that a disciple of Christ shall not go to the theatre; engage in the merry dance; play at cards; attend the horse-race, the circus, and other such places of vain and licentious amusements. And hence many seem to regard it as their right and privilege to engage, *ad libitum*, in all such demoralizing and irreligious practices.

But let us test this matter a little further. In 1 Cor. x. 31, Paul, speaking by the Holy Spirit, says: "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatever ye do, do all to the glory of God." It is manifest, therefore, that the disciples of Christ are all forbidden to engage in any thing whatever which has not for its object the glory of God. But did any one ever glorify God by playing at cards; participating in the licentious dance; patronizing the theatre; or encouraging the horse-race, the circus, or any other like worldly, profane, or irreligious

amusements? I think not. What think you, courteous reader?

Or let us test, if you please, all such matters by another law of Christ. In Phil. iv. 8, the same Apostle commands and exhorts his brethren as follows: "Finally, brethren," says he, "whatever things are true, whatever things are honorable, whatever things are just, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things are of good report—if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things." Now, will any one who really loves the Lord Jesus Christ, and who is honestly and prayerfully trying to serve Him—will any such person affirm that dancing, theatre-going, card-playing, horse-racing, etc., are things that are pure and honorable? Does any one maintain that they are of good report? If they are not, then, indeed, they are as positively forbidden as is the sin of drunkenness, murder, theft, or any other vice. They are forbidden by Him to whom has been committed *all authority* in heaven and on the earth; and who has Himself assured us that even every "*idle word*" will be brought into

the final reckoning on the day of judgment (Matt. xii. 36).

Take another example. Take, if you please, the duty of family worship. Many parents utterly neglect this; and some of them, at least, profess to do so because, as they allege, it is nowhere positively commanded in the Holy Scriptures. But does not Paul say in Ephesians vi. 4, "Fathers, provoke not your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord?" And did any parent ever do this as it should be done, without calling his children together, at least every morning and evening, for the purpose of instructing them in the Holy Scriptures, and praying with them and for them? I presume not. And I presume, moreover, that to fulfil all the duties and obligations of this very broad and comprehensive precept, without these daily instructions and devotional exercises, is practically impossible. And, if so, then it follows that the precept, "Bring up your children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," embraces family worship just as certainly as that thousands embrace

hundreds, and that hundreds include tens and units.

But the main trouble in all such cases is not owing so much to a want of intellectual as it is to a want of spiritual discernment. It is hard to make a blind man see and comprehend the infinite shades and varieties of color that abound everywhere in the heavens above us and in the earth beneath us. It is hard to make a deaf man perceive and enjoy even the sweetest sounds that ever enchanted the ears of mortals. And just so it is immeasurably difficult to make a spirit that is not largely endowed and enamoured with the beauty of holiness, perceive and comprehend the great moral destitution of the prayerless family, and the infinite loathsomeness of the drinking-saloon, the card-table, the ballroom, and the race-field. God never intended to govern His people, like so many slaves, by mere positive and compulsory enactments. He likes a willing service. And hence He has filled the Bible, and especially the New Testament, with *motives* high as heaven, deep as hell, and enduring as eternity. He draws us "with cords of love as

with the bands of a man." The man whose whole heart is full of this divine principle, and who, like Saul of Tarsus, simply inquires, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?"—such a man does not stand in need of very many direct and positive precepts. For all such humble, honest, and penitent inquirers, the Bible contains within itself a perfect code of laws, embracing all the instructions that are really necessary to a life of godliness.

RULE IV.—*We may adopt whatever subordinate rules and regulations are really necessary in order to the full and perfect discharge of all our Christian duties and obligations; provided, however, that these shall in no case be inconsistent with the instructions given to us by Christ and His Apostles.* A few such rules might be of much service to every Christian in the daily discipline of his own heart, as well as in the practical results of his own life; and they are often absolutely necessary in the more comprehensive and complicated workings of the body of Christ. It is required, for instance, that in all the labors of the Church, for her own edification, as well as for the salvation

of the world, "all things shall be done decently and in order" (1 Cor. xiv. 40). And, for this purpose, Christ has Himself, through His Apostles, given to us much practical instruction; and, especially, has He ordained that men of rare qualifications shall be chosen and appointed to act as shepherds of the flock. But, in order to do this properly, it is necessary that these men should appoint their own chairman and secretary; that they should hold regular meetings of their own body, for the purpose of hearing reports, and consulting about all matters pertaining to the interests of the Church; that they should, after due conference with the members, determine when and where the Church should meet for public and social worship, and also what should be the order of all such meetings; that they should take into consideration the organization and interests of the Sunday-school; and, in a word, that they should so divide the labors of the Church among themselves and the several members that all may be usefully employed in some way, and that all the interests of the Church may be properly cared for.

But in all these matters, and a great many other practical details, we must be guided largely, under the general directions and instructions of the Apostles, by our own sense of duty and propriety. If it be thought best, for instance, that all the male members shall occupy one side of the house, and the females the other, it may be perfectly right, and consistent with the law of Christ, that they should do so. Or if, after due conference, it should be thought best that all the members of the same family should sit together, this also may be right and legitimate. But, if any congregation should, by a vote of her elders, or members, ordain that certain pews shall be occupied only by those who can dress in silk or satin, and who will agree to pay a large stipend for the privilege of occupying an aristocratic position in the assembly of the saints, this would be unlawful. Christ recognizes and authorizes no such rights and privileges among His followers. His law is, *In honor prefer others to yourselves.* Make the slave feel that, in the Church of Christ, he is the Lord's freeman; and make the freeman feel that he is the Lord's bondman.

(See Luke xiv. 7–11; Rom. xii. 10, and 1 Cor. vii. 21–23.)

The same liberty of choice is also given to the Church in reference to her missionary labors. It is made her solemn and imperative duty to make disciples of all the nations; and to baptize them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. But many of the practical details of this work are, of necessity, left to the wisdom and discretion of her own members. If any disciple, who, in the judgment of his brethren, is qualified to preach the Gospel, sees fit to become a missionary at his own expense, and to devote his life to the work of saving the heathen, it is certainly his privilege to do so. "Let him that heareth say, Come," is the second and last great Commission of our blessed Lord to every one of His true and faithful disciples. Or, if any disciple is not himself qualified to preach, but is able and willing, at his own cost, to send out and sustain a faithful missionary in some dark and destitute region, it is also his right and privilege to do so; and he will just as certainly receive his reward as if he had gone in

his own proper person. Or, if any one congregation of disciples see fit to *coöperate* in this work, and to send out one or more missionaries to destitute regions, they have certainly the right to do so, on the same principle that they have a right to coöperate in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, or any other good work; and they can, moreover, plead the example of the Church of Jerusalem, and also of the Church of Antioch. (See Acts xi. 22–24; and xiii. 1–3.) Or, if one congregation is not able to do this, then two or three may on the same principle unite and coöperate in sending out as many missionaries as they choose. Or, if the work is too great for a given district, and a more general and systematic effort is deemed necessary, then, also, on the same principle, the churches of a whole State, nation, or continent, may unite for its accomplishment. They may, through their messengers, hold their annual or their semi-annual meetings, appoint all necessary agents, and make any arrangements consistent with the law of Christ that they may deem necessary in order to the accomplishment of their object. But in no case have they a right

to make any rules and regulations that are inconsistent with the laws of Christ. Such a society or association of brethren is, in fact, nothing more nor less than the Church herself acting through her own chosen representatives. But the Church is, of course, subject to every law and ordinance of Christ, and so also are her representatives. If she has no right to adopt a money basis of membership, neither have her representatives a right to do so. But they may, like the elders of a church, choose their own officers, adopt their own by-laws, and do any thing else, not inconsistent with the laws of Christ, that they may think necessary in order to the speedy and efficient accomplishment of their work.

RULE V.— *We should tolerate in one another, as Christian brethren, and as sister congregations, any opinion or practice which is not in itself, or in its tendencies, in conflict with the law of Christ.* "Where God speaks we should speak, and where God is silent we should be silent." We cannot be too particular in respecting, teaching, and enforcing whatever Christ has enjoined upon us. The laws of the

kingdom of heaven are, during Christ's mediatorial reign, just as inflexible and immutable as the laws of Nature. While He sits on the throne of His glory, not one jot or tittle can be innocently added to them or taken from them. Indeed, I cannot conceive of any thing that is more daringly presumptuous on the part of any erring mortal, than to presume to change or set aside in any way the decrees of Omnipotence. To do this, is to brand upon ourselves, in plain and unmistakable characters, one of the leading characteristics of the "man of sin." (See Dan. vii. 25; 2 Thess. ii. 3, 4; 1 Tim. iv. 1–3.) And hence we can never countenance or sanction in any way infant baptism, for several reasons:

1. Because the man who stands up before heaven and earth, and says to the infant, "By the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ, I baptize thee into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit," says simply what is not true. Christ has given no such authority to any living man. "Add thou not to His words (then) lest He reprove thee, and thou be found a liar" (Prov. xxx. 6).

2. Because the tendency of the practice is to deceive the people, and to set aside one of the most solemn and impressive ordinances of God. Of the truth of this, the history of the Church, for the last fifteen hundred years, furnishes abundant evidence.

3. Because the license assumed in this particular case is well calculated to beget and foster in the public mind a latitudinarian spirit with regard to all the laws and ordinances of God. Its legitimate fruits are very plainly seen in some of the extreme issues of what is now in popular parlance called "*liberal Christianity*," than which nothing can be of more dangerous tendency.*

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* The tendency of the human mind to run from one extreme into another is really amazing. Peter could honestly say to his Master, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." He was in the main a true man; and, on this occasion, he no doubt meant just what he said. For, when Judas appeared with a band of soldiers to take Jesus, Peter was the first to draw the sword. And, had it been necessary, he would have died on the spot for his Master. But when Jesus said to him, "Put up thy sword into its sheath," he could not under-

And the same objections may, in the main, be urged against substituting sprinkling, or pouring, for immersion; against creating and ordaining in the Church an order of bishops, separate and distinct from the elders; and also against sundry other practices and innovations which are wholly at variance with the word of God, and the uniform practice of the primitive churches.

But beyond this clearly-defined and conse-

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stand it. This was a lesson which he had not yet learned, and which, in the then carnal state of his mind, he was utterly incapable of comprehending. And hence we next find him on the opposite extreme, cursing and swearing that he did not even know Jesus.

And just so it is with many in our own day. One man is ready and willing, if need be, to fight for even the conceived mint, and anise, and cummin, of the Christian religion; provided only, that he be allowed to use, like Peter, his own carnal weapons. But if this is not permitted, he will, in all probability, run to the opposite extreme, and engage in the zealous advocacy of what he is pleased to call "*liberal Christianity*," which, by-the-way, is in some respects about as far from the "*golden mean*" of pure and primitive Christianity as were the vulgar oaths of Simon Peter.

crated ground, the limits of which must always be held sacred, and of which we cannot and dare not yield even a hair's breadth, there is a wide field over which the followers of Christ are allowed to range and ramble almost *ad libitum.* Or, to speak more literally, there is a large chapter of things which are, in themselves, wholly indifferent, and concerning which Christ has ordained as follows: "*Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind;*" only, "*take heed that this liberty of yours does not become a stumbling-block in the way of others.*" (See Rom. xiv.–xv. 13.)

This law is well illustrated in the life and teachings of the Apostle Paul. Whenever there was danger of so using even those things which are in themselves wholly indifferent, as to nullify a law of Christ, or to set aside any thing pertaining to the Christian religion, then no one could be more decided and uncompromising in his opposition to them. He who circumcised Timothy in order to make him a more acceptable Evangelist to his Jewish brethren, was constrained under different circumstances to say to the Galatians, "If ye be circumcised,

Christ shall profit you nothing" (Gal. v. 2). He saw that, in this case, there was danger of a real and most ruinous innovation. He saw that, through the influence of false teachers, the brethren of Galatia were in imminent danger of neglecting the Gospel, and trusting for salvation in the laws and institutions of Moses. And hence he was constrained, as an Apostle of Christ, to "stand like an anvil" between them and error.

But, whenever there was no such danger of compromising in any way a law or an ordinance of Christ, then, indeed, no one could go further than he in yielding to the prejudices of both Jews and Gentiles. He would shave his head at Cenchrea, offer sacrifices at Jerusalem, and keep the Sabbath in all places, rather than in any way retard the progress of the Gospel by offending against the prejudices of his Jewish brethren.

I am aware that good men and able critics entertain different views with regard to Paul's motives and purposes in observing the rites and ceremonies of the Law; and, especially, in taking upon himself the vow of the Nazarite,

involving, as it did, the offering of animal sacrifices, etc. (See Numb. vi. 1–21; and Acts xxi. 17–26.)

1. Some maintain that Paul did this in ignorance, not knowing that the law of Moses including the rite of sacrifice, the covenant of the priesthood, etc., had then been abolished.

2. Others are of the opinion that, in at least the case given in Acts xxi. 17–26, Paul acted from the fear of his Jewish brethren, just as Peter had once done at Antioch. (See Gal. ii. 11–13.)

3. But the majority of critics concur in the view that, in this case, Paul acted neither from ignorance nor from dissimulation, but that he did as he did, simply in conformity with that law of Christian benevolence which requires us to respect even the weaknesses and prejudices of our brethren, so far as we can do so without in any way setting aside or compromising the requirements of the Gospel.

These three hypotheses are, I think, exhaustive of the whole matter. At all events, they seem to embrace every thing relating to this case, which is at all worthy of our considera-

tion. And, as the question before us is one of very great practical importance, it may be well to consider it carefully. Let us then examine, as briefly as we can, each of these hypotheses in order. And—

1. Did Paul act from ignorance in this case, or did he not? Did he know that the ordinances of legal purification, shaving the head, killing and offering animal sacrifices, etc., were all abolished at this time; or did he regard them as of still binding obligation on himself and his Jewish brethren?

That he knew soon after this that they were abolished, must, I think, be admitted by all. For, in A. D. 62, he said to the Colossians: "And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses; *blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross.* And having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. Let no man therefore judge you in meat or in drink, or in respect of a holy

day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath-days, which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ" (Col. ii. 13–17). And, about A. D. 63, he, or some one of his colleagues in the work of the ministry, wrote to his Hebrew brethren as follows: "For the Law, having a shadow of good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offer year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have no more consciousness of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year *For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats, should take away sins.* Wherefore, when he cometh into the world he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me. In burnt-offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, to do Thy will, O God. Above, when he saith, sacrifice, and offering, and burnt-offerings, and offerings for

sin, thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein, which are offered by the Law; then said he, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. *He* taketh away the first will that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifice which can never take away sins; but this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God, from thenceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. *For by one offering He has perfected forever them that are sanctified*" (Heb. x. 1–14).

It is plain, therefore, that when Paul wrote his letters to the Colossians and the Hebrews, in A. D. 62 and 63, he knew that the entire Law of Moses had, as a typical and religious institution, been nailed to the cross of Christ, and that it was henceforth no longer religiously binding on any one. But did he know this in A. D. 58, when he came up to Jerusalem to attend the feast of Pentecost (Acts xx. 16), and to bring alms to his suffering Hebrew

brethren? Compare Acts xxi. 27; and xxiv. 17, 18.

I think he did:

(1.) *Because a knowledge of this was, from the beginning of the kingdom of heaven, essential to both the right proclamation and obedience of the Gospel.* From the opening of the kingdom, on the day of Pentecost, A. D. 34, and onward, Jesus Christ was proclaimed to the people as the only Saviour; as the way, the truth, the resurrection, and the life. There was no attempt made by the Apostles and Prophets to compromise between Judaism and Christianity as religious institutions; as means of procuring pardon, justification, sanctification, and redemption. That the Law was still necessary to the Jews as a *civil institution*, and that it served also in some respects to promote their *social* and even their religious enjoyment, is, of course, conceded. But that any Christian could ever consistently trust for salvation partly in the blood of bulls and of goats, and partly in the blood of Christ, seems to me to be quite impossible. If this were a fatal error when Paul wrote his letter to the Hebrews, in A. D.

63, was it any less so in A. D. 53, or 43, or at the beginning of the kingdom? And can we therefore doubt that the Epistle to the Hebrews is in perfect harmony with all the instruction given by the Apostles to their Hebrew brethren, even from the commencement of the Christian Church? I freely admit that there was in some respects a gradual development of Gospel truth. But, with respect to the ground of man's justification before God, there was certainly no room left for doubt or vacillation. It was Christ crucified that was offered to the people as their *only Saviour* in Jerusalem, in Samaria, in Corinth, in Rome, and in the uttermost parts of the earth.

(2.) *Because, in his Epistle to the Romans, written at Corinth, in the beginning of the same year,* A. D. 58, *and, of course, but a very short time before his interview with James and the elders at Jerusalem, Paul teaches, not only the utter impossibility of any one's being justified or sanctified by the Law of Moses, but he goes even further, and declares in the most explicit terms that the Law was abolished, and that the Hebrew Christians had been released*

*from all obligation to it as a religious institution, in order that they might bring forth fruit unto God, and attain to that holiness of heart, and purity of life, through the Gospel, which they had found to be wholly unattainable through the Law.* "Know ye not, brethren," says he ("for I speak to them that know the Law), that the Law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman who hath a husband is bound by the Law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of the husband. So, then, if, while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress. But if her husband be dead, she is freed from that law, so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the Law by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God.* For when we were in the flesh, the emotions of sin which were by the Law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. *But now we are*

*delivered from the Law, that being dead wherein we were held*, that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter" (Rom. vii. 1–6).

Here, it seems to me, there is no room left for doubt in relation to the whole matter. Paul in this passage declares by the Spirit, in the most unequivocal terms, that he and his Hebrew brethren had all died to the Law and been married to Christ, in order that they might bring forth fruit unto God.

I know that it is alleged by some, for whose opinions in religious matters I have very great respect, that Paul is here speaking of the Law in general; but that, in making this declaration, he has no reference to bloody sacrifices, or at least that he himself did not so understand his own language, whatever may have been the intention and mind of the Spirit.

But why make animal sacrifices an exception in this broad and emphatic declaration of the Apostle? Is there in this epistle, or elsewhere, the shadow of evidence to support such an allegation? Why not except with equal propriety the offering of incense? the diverse

washings? the annual festivals? or in fact any other element of the Mosaic economy? The fact is, that the law of sacrifice is so fully blended with all the other rites and ceremonies of the Law, that they must all stand or fall together. And so Paul evidently understood the matter in his Epistle to the Romans, as well as in his Epistle to the Hebrews. The great contrast between the sacrifices of the Law and the sacrifice of Christ, constitutes, in many cases, the main point of his argument in the former as well as in the latter. This will appear from the following example: "For what the Law (with all its bloody rites and sacrifices) could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God (has done by) sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and by an offering for sin has condemned sin in the flesh, that the righteousness of the Law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit" (Rom. viii. 3, 4).

To this evidence we might add also the testimony of Paul given in his letter to the Galatians. This was written certainly not later than his Epistle to the Romans, about the

beginning of the year A. D. 58, and perhaps even as early as A. D. 55. In the third and fourth chapters, particularly, he speaks in the most explicit terms of the abolition of the Law, and of the superior advantages and privileges of the New Economy. He says, for instance, that, on account of transgression, the Law was added to the promise made to Abraham concerning Christ, "*till the Seed should come;*" and that it served as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. But now, since Christ has Himself come, he avers that "*we are no longer under the schoolmaster.*"

But it is quite unnecessary to multiply witnesses. The evidence given is, I think, quite sufficient to prove that both Paul and James, in the case referred to, acted with a full knowledge of the fact that the Law of Moses, including the law of the Nazarite, the priesthood, animal sacrifices, etc., had been previously abrogated; and consequently that the first hypothesis is wholly untenable.

2. How is it then with the second hypothesis? Is there any evidence that in this case Paul acted hypocritically or deceptively from

the fear of his Jewish brethren? Surely not. For—

(1.) *Such a course would be wholly inconsistent with his general character and manner of life, both as a Jew and as a Christian.* A man who dared to face even the wild beasts at Ephesus; to encounter the barbarous persecutions of the heathen; and to stand unmoved and undaunted even in the presence of the bloody Nero and his licentious court—such a man was not likely to be much alarmed by the report that many of his Jewish brethren were dissatisfied with his teachings in reference to the Law of Moses. He had come to Jerusalem to die for the Lord Jesus, if it were necessary for him to do so. (See Acts xx. 22–24, and xxi. 10–14.)

(2.) *The hypothesis is wholly inconsistent with the known facts of the case.* It is evident, from the testimony given by Luke, that in this case Paul acted in compliance with the deliberate advice given by the Apostle James and the Elders of the Church at Jerusalem, many of whom were no doubt inspired men, and were of course well qualified to give ad-

vice on any and all matters pertaining to the purity and harmony of the Church. These men were well aware that many *slanderous* reports had been circulated against Paul, not only to his own prejudice as a man and a preacher of the Gospel, but also greatly to the injury of the Church; and, as guardians of the interests of Christ's kingdom, they were anxious that these *false* reports should be corrected. They saw at once, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, the very best way and means of doing this, so far as it could be effected under existing circumstances. The advice was deliberately given by James and the Elders, and it was just as deliberately accepted by Paul; so that from the whole narrative there is not the slightest evidence that Paul had any fear on the occasion, or that it was his purpose to make a false impression on any one. His object was simply to correct what was false, and to comply with the known customs and prejudices of his countrymen, as far as the law of Christ would permit, but no further.

(3.) This hypothesis is also inconsistent with the promised aid of the Holy Spirit, which

was given to the Apostles for the special purpose of enabling them to be faithful witnesses, faithful advisers, faithful lawgivers, and faithful servants of the Church of Christ. If this brief chapter of sacred history was not written for our instruction and guidance, then, I ask, What portion of the New Testament was written for this purpose? If the advice of James and his inspired colleagues is to be set at naught in this case, then what is to become of their advice in any other case? And, if Paul erred in this instance, then who shall say in what other instance he did not err? Concede that Paul, and James, and the Elders of the Church at Jerusalem, erred in this instance through ignorance, fear, prejudice, or any other cause, and there is an end of all Apostolic authority; then the New Testament becomes to us of about as much value as the writings of Plato, Seneca, or Aristotle!

But this is, of course, only a "*reductio ad absurdum*," or a demonstration of the fact that both the first and second given hypotheses lead to an absurdity. The promises of Christ to His Apostles were all "*Yea and amen.*" It

was the Holy Spirit, acting through the Apostles, that suggested every precept, every word of advice, and every practical illustration, that is recorded in the New Testament for our instruction. And hence we are constrained to conclude that the third given hypothesis is the correct one, and that the conduct of Paul in this case is but an illustration of that general law of Christian benevolence and Divine adaptation which requires us to yield, within certain limits, to the customs and prejudices of all men, and to do good to all as we have opportunity.

It seems to me, therefore, that the right understanding and application of this general law of Christian benevolence and propriety would go far to correct many existing evils. It is not true that "we cannot lawfully do any thing as Christians which is not specifically commanded and required in the New Testament." Nor is it true, on the other hand, that "we may do any thing which is not specifically forbidden." These are the extremes to which the erring spirit of man is ever vibrating; but the Spirit of God teaches us a very different lesson.

It teaches us, indeed, that every Christian is subject to the law of Christ in all places and under all circumstances; that he cannot think, or speak, or act, in the closet, in the family, in the Church, in the state, or in any part of the wide world, without being amenable to the laws of his Divine Sovereign. But, then, it further teaches us that many of these laws are generic, and that, in applying them, we should often look to the effects and consequences of our actions. The same principle of gravity that causes the mercury to sink in the jar, makes it rise in the barometer. And just so it often is in Christian ethics. The same principle of right or benevolence which requires of us a certain act under one train of circumstances, not unfrequently forbids our doing the very same thing under different circumstances. Had Paul been among his Gentile brethren in the city of Rome, Corinth, or Ephesus, he would not have done as he did among his Hebrew brethren in Jerusalem.

If a congregation of Christians should think proper, during a protracted meeting, to invite penitent *backsliders* to come forward to

confess their sins and to be prayed for, at what they may see fit to call a mourners' bench, a backsliders' bench, or any thing else, I do not think that in so doing they would of necessity violate any law of Christ.* These delinquents,

* I trust that no one will infer, from this, that I am in favor of introducing novelties of even the most harmless and inoffensive kind into the Church of Christ. It is well to adhere strictly, as far as possible, to the beautiful simplicity of the primitive Church in all our acts of public and social worship. For, even in matters which are in themselves wholly indifferent, there may be, owing to circumstances, a *tendency* to evil. It is, for instance, the privilege of any congregation of disciples to set apart occasionally a day for special prayer and thanksgiving to God. But, nevertheless, we may so multiply and pervert such seasons of festivity and devotion as to cast a shadow over Christianity itself, and so draw away the minds and hearts of many from the spirituality and simplicity of all acceptable worship. This tendency was manifest in the churches of Galatia even in Paul's time, "Ye observe days and months," says he, "and times and years. I am afraid of you, lest I have bestowed on you labor in vain" (Gal. iv. 10, 11). This evil has been developed in the Roman Catholic Church, to a most alarming extent; so much so, indeed, that the simplicity of the Gospel is completely overshadowed by

having once put on Christ by faith, repentance, confession, and baptism, no longer stand to the Church in the exact attitude and relation of aliens. It is right and proper that they should confess their sins, pray for their forgiveness, and ask others also to pray for them. And this may, of course, be done at a backsliders' bench, or at any other bench or place that the

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the multiplied and imposing ceremonies of Papal innovations.

I do not, therefore, like to see any unnecessary novelties, however harmless they may be in themselves, introduced into the house of God. And hence I would prefer that neither tuning-forks nor music-books should be used in our worshipping assemblies. The natural tendency of all such helps is, I think, to distract the minds of the singers somewhat from the sentiment of the psalm or hymn, and, of course, to interfere in some degree with the melody of the heart, without which the most perfect music is but as sounding brass or a tinkling cymbal. But, nevertheless, I am inclined to think that, according to our fifth rule, we should tolerate in our churches the use of tuning-forks, music-books, and many other things equally harmless, rather than, by our obstinate opposition to them, mar the peace and harmony of the brethren.

Elders of the Church may see fit to designate. But the case is very different when *aliens* are invited to such a bench to obtain pardon, simply through the influence of their own prayers and the prayers of the congregation. This is to set at naught some of the plainest and most direct instructions of the Holy Spirit; for to all who gladly receive its teachings it says, as it did to the inquiring Pentecostal converts: "*Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*" (Acts ii. 38).

Under the Old Economy, instrumental music was, by Divine authority, made an element of public and social worship. "Praise God," says the inspired Psalmist, "with stringed instruments and organs; praise Him on the loud cymbals." And hence it is evident that there is really nothing wrong in the "divine art" of instrumental music.

But is it now proper to use the organ, the harp, or the cymbal, in the Church of Christ? If so, under what law of the kingdom may it be introduced? We are commanded to ad-

monish one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord (Eph. v. 19 and Col. iii. 16). And this, of course, implies that it is right and proper to use whatever means may be really necessary, in order that we may thus praise and magnify God in our devotions. It requires, for instance, that we shall sing *vocally* as well as *spiritually;* that we shall all, as far as we can, make melody with our *lips* as well as in our *hearts:* for there can be no doubt that the emotions of the heart depend very much on the utterances of the voice.

But have the tones of the organ a similar effect? Do they serve to cultivate the heart, and to excite within us emotions of gratitude and love, as do our own vocal utterances? So it is alleged by many. They argue that the organ assists the voice, and that their combined influence serves very greatly to excite in the heart that purely spiritual melody which is in the sight of God of great price. This, I am inclined to think, is, after all that has been said on the subject, the most pointed and plausible argument that has yet been urged in favor

of having instrumental music in our Churches. But is it a valid argument? Is it a *fact* that the use of the organ does so influence the heart and the affections? In some cases it may be so; but that the *general* tendency of instrumental music is to quench the influence of the Spirit in the heart, and to promote in the Churches a cold, barren, and lifeless formalism, has, I think, been historically demonstrated; for, otherwise, how shall we account for the fact that, wherever the organ is used, there, there is at least manifested a constant *tendency* to give up congregational singing? The command to sing and make melody in your hearts to the Lord, is addressed to every disciple of the Lord Jesus; and whatever, therefore, interferes with the general participation of the whole congregation in this part of social worship, is manifestly inconsistent with an ordinance of Christ.

This, then, it seems to me, is one valid reason against the use of instrumental music in the Church of Christ; and another is, that many, very many of the most intelligent, pious, and consistent followers of Christ are opposed

to it. Its tendency in most cases is certainly to alienate the hearts of God's people from one another, and to promote strife and division, as well as a spirit of worldliness, among the followers of the Lord Jesus; and hence I do not see how any *Christian* can consistently favor the use of the organ, or any other instrument, in the congregation of the saints; and if all the disciples of Christ were as well instructed and as pious as they should be, I do not think that instrumental music would ever be used in public worship.

But, just here is the trouble. None of us are yet perfect; and hence it must, of necessity, be that offences will come. The organ has been introduced into some Churches, and the probability is, that it will also be introduced into many others. What, then, shall be done? Should we divide the Church on this account? Should we violently rend into pieces the body of Christ, simply because a majority of its members are in favor of using an organ? I think not. It is no small matter to divide the body of Christ. And we had better take care, lest, in our opposition to organs, we should

be found to even out-Herod Herod himself. Let us endeavor to overcome evil with good. And while we humbly and earnestly protest against every evil in the Church, and do what we can consistently to remove it, let us, at the same time, see to it that all things are done in love; and so let us fulfil the law of Christ. For, remember, dear brethren, that "*the end of the commandment is love, out of a pure heart, and a good conscience, and faith unfeigned.*"

We have thus very briefly noticed a few of the many things in which we have been instructed by the Apostles of our Lord and Saviour; and also some of the rules by which we should be governed in all our endeavors to make the Word of God the guide of our lives. It would, of course, be both interesting and profitable to go more into detail, if our time and prescribed limits would permit. But I trust that enough has already been said to convince every candid reader—

1. *That the New Testament bears on its face the seal of infinite wisdom, and of almighty authority.* No other book in all the

libraries of earth will compare with it in its adaptations to the capacities, wants, and circumstances of all ranks and classes of mankind. It is, indeed, "a little book;" but, nevertheless, it contains within itself "all things pertaining to life and godliness." It gives us all the instruction that is really necessary respecting our duty to God, to ourselves, to our families, to the Church, to the state, and to the world. And, in a word, it is a practical demonstration of the fact that all authority in heaven and on the earth is given to its Divine Author.

2. *That it is awfully dangerous and presumptuous on the part of fallible men to tamper and trifle with the Word of God; or to so change or modify any of its precepts and ordinances, as to better suit their own imperfect sense of propriety.* When God speaks, we would naturally suppose that all men would be silent and obedient. But not so. The Old Serpent is not the only one who has arrogantly and blasphemously said, "You shall not surely die." Vain man has always been disposed to tamper with the decrees of Omnipotence; and

to change the laws and ordinances of Heaven to suit his own convenience. Indeed, so very common is this error, that there is reason to doubt whether there is now on earth a religious society that is not more or less guilty of it. And who can estimate the consequences of such presumption on the part of man! How many millions are to-day in Tartarus, who might be in Paradise, had the followers of Christ but faithfully observed all the instructions which the Apostles have left for us on record!

3. *That the only practicable way of restoring peace, unity, and harmony to the Church of Christ, is to renounce all human authority in matters of religion, and to make "the Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible," our constant rule of faith and practice.* I would not willingly discourage any effort that good and pious men are now making for the peace and prosperity of Zion. It augurs well to see any who love the Lord Jesus Christ, praying earnestly and laboring constantly in any way for the unity and harmony of God's people. Some good will, no doubt, come out

of all such well-meant efforts. But surely it is altogether folly to suppose that Christians can ever be brought to unite on any human basis. It will require the sanction and influence of ALMIGHTY AUTHORITY to collect together and to unite in one body the several members of the household of faith that are scattered abroad. And hence what is now needed, in order to the unity and coöperation of God's people, is—

(1.) A practical recognition of the supreme authority of Christ, as our Sovereign King and Head.

(2.) A practical recognition of the authority of the Apostles, and also of all that they have left on record for our instruction and government.

(3.) A practical rejection of all human authority in matters of religion; and a hearty reception of the Word of God as our only rule of faith and practice.

Let this be done in the spirit of Christian love, and in the exercise of that "wisdom which is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits,

without partiality, and without hypocrisy;" and then, soon, all else will be done. For then "the mountain of the Lord's house will be established in the top of the mountains, and be exalted above the hills; and all nations will flow unto it." This will appear more obvious from the following chapter.

## CHAPTER IV.

*Happy consequences of observing all that Christ has commanded.*

It has been proved, I hope, with sufficient clearness and fulness, in the preceding chapter, that God has given to us, through Christ and His Apostles, a perfect guide of life—a guide which is neither too exacting nor too latitudinarian, but which is divinely adapted to the capacity, wants, and circumstances of all men. It should be carefully remembered, however, that it is not the mere having of this guide, but the faithful observance of all its requirements, that makes us happy. "Not every one," says Christ, "that saith unto me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven, but he that *doeth* the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. vii. 21). And again He says, "If ye know these things,

happy are ye if ye *do* them" (John xiii. 17). So, also, Paul testifies in his letter to the Romans. "Not the hearers of the law," he says, "are just before God, but the *doers* of the law shall be justified" (Rom. ii. 13). And James, in his letter "to the twelve tribes scattered abroad," says, with equal point and clearness, "Whoso looketh into the perfect law of liberty, and continueth therein, he being not a forgetful hearer, but a *doer* of the work, this man shall be blessed in his *doing*" (James i. 25).

I wish, then, to notice in this closing chapter, some of the happy consequences that would follow from a careful observance of all that Christ has required of us through the Apostles. And, for the sake of order and perspicuity, I will notice—

I. The benefits that would in this way result to us personally, as individual believers.

II. The benefits that would result to the families of all such obedient followers of Christ.

III. The benefits that would result to the Church in general, and to the several congregations of which it is composed. And—

IV. The benefits that would, through the Church, result to the world.

SECTION I.

*Personal benefits to individual believers.*

When God created man, He endowed him with certain desires and appetites, in harmony with the sphere and rank which he was to occupy in the scale of creation. The normal exercise and gratification of these were not only right and proper in themselves, but they were, in fact, essential to the existence, propagation, and happiness of the race. So long as man remained in a state of innocency, they were to him a source of unmingled pleasure. But, when sin came, all was changed. No power or susceptibility of the soul was then destroyed, and none was created; but all its faculties were then more or less perverted. Man became a slave to "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye and the pride of life;" and hence it is that, to this day, our own lusts, and passions, and appetites, are the greatest disturbers of our peace and happiness. Excess in eating and drinking, and other carnal indul-

gences, is now, it would seem, the common order of society; while envy, jealousy, hatred, and revenge, have thrown the world into a state of perpetual anarchy and war.

Christ proposes to change all this—to bring man back again to his normal and primeval state. And for this purpose He requires that every man shall crucify the flesh with its affections and its lusts (Gal. v. 24); that he shall "live soberly, and righteously, and godly," as a condition of enjoying everlasting life (Titus ii. 12); and that he shall, in a word, give "ALL DILIGENCE" in adding to his faith "temperance" or self-government, as well as every other Christian virtue, if he would become an heir of the eternal inheritance, through the redemption that is offered to us in the Gospel. (*See* 1 Cor. vi. 9, 10; Gal. v. 19–21; Phil. iii. 18, 19; Heb. xii. 14; 2 Peter i. 5–11, etc.)

This He does not, however, require any man to do simply in and of himself. He knows very well that we cannot do it. The chains and fetters that bind us to sin and Satan are too strong to be broken by our

unaided efforts. But Christ calls on us to do all that we possibly can, assuring us, at the same time, that He will do the rest. And so He gives the Holy Spirit to all them that obey Him (Acts v. 32). He gives it to us as a Comforter and Advocate (John xvi. 7; 1 John ii. 1), to help our infirmities (Rom. viii. 26), and to strengthen us with all might in the inner man (Eph. iii. 16). He sends His holy angels also to minister to the heirs of salvation (Heb. i. 14), while He Himself is ever present with us to give us the victory. "Lo," says He, "*I am with you all the days even to the end of the age*" (Matt. xxviii. 19).

No one, then, need be discouraged in view of the magnitude and difficulty of the undertaking. True, indeed, our conflict with sin is very great, and not unfrequently of long continuance. It will never wholly terminate while we live in the flesh. But that it is, nevertheless, quite possible for us, through Divine grace, to gain such a victory, over the world, the flesh, and the devil, that we will be no longer subject to their slavish despotism, is evident (1) from the fact that God Himself has

positively required this of us; and (2) from the fact that many of our predecessors, and even of our contemporaries, have actually gained this victory, and come off more than conquerors through Him who has loved us. And what some have done, all, of course, may do. We have but to observe carefully and prayerfully all that Christ has required of us through the Apostles, and then the Holy Spirit will dwell in us and fill us with "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance" (Gal. v. 22, 23); Christ Himself will also be with us (Matt. xxviii. 19); and all things will work together for our good (Rom. viii. 28). This is enough. Any thing more is perhaps hardly desirable in our present state.

## SECTION II.

*Benefits to the families of believers.*

Parents are, by God's appointment, made responsible for the proper training, instruction, and education of their children. Bring up your children "in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," is one of the most solemn,

and, at the same time, one of the most difficult charges that God has ever imposed on any class of mortals. Human nature is in itself the most delicate and complex of all things earthly. And hence, to properly develop, mould, and educate the human spirit, even in its primeval state, would have been an exceedingly difficult and embarrassing problem. But it has become tenfold more so in our present lapsed and preternatural condition. For the mind of the child is now prone to vice even from its birth (Psa. li. 5; John iii. 6; Rom. iii. 10–18; v. 12, 18, 19; Eph. ii. 3, etc.). Its passions and appetites are all more or less perverted by sin; and the influences of the world are largely adverse to its proper training and culture. No wonder, then, that in irreligious families so many of the children are given up to all manner of carnal lusts and pleasures; and no wonder that the vicious practices of youth become so often the enslaving habits of manhood. The wonder is that, under such circumstances, the grace of God is able to rescue even occasionally one of these habitual transgressors as a brand from everlasting burnings.

But how very different the case would be, if the parents were all pious; and if they were carefully observing all that Christ has enjoined on us through the Apostles! As it is ever true, that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh" (Matt. xii. 34), these parents would naturally and habitually talk to their children about God, and Christ, and heaven, when sitting in their own houses, when walking by the way, when lying down, and when rising up (Deut. vi. 4–9). And this they would do, not in a repulsive and forbidding way, but with all the tenderness and grace of that Spirit which would be as a well-spring of love and joy in their own hearts (John vii. 37–39). Such parental influences strengthened by the habitual reading of God's word, family prayer, and a life of holy trust in God and submission to His will, could not fail to have a most salutary effect on the tender minds and hearts of young children. Most of them would, no doubt, be converted to God at a very early age; and thus might be saved, through family influence, millions of precious souls, who, for want of this early training, will

be banished with an "everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of his power." The Commission, carried out to its legitimate results, would therefore make of many a house a nursery for heaven, which is now a nursery for hell. It would make Bethels of our homes, and fill them with the songs of pure and joyful hearts; so that it might be said again with truth and propriety, "Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise."

"Happy the home where Jesus' name
Is sweet to every ear;
Where children early lisp His fame
And parents hold Him dear.

"Happy the home where prayer is heard,
And praise is wont to rise;
Where parents love the sacred word,
And live but for the skies."

## SECTION III.

*Benefits to the Church.*

Sin has had the effect to alienate the hearts of all men from God, and also from one another (Col. i. 21). And, as a result of this, it

has divided the race into many unfriendly castes, and filled the world with adverse interests and hostile armies.

To correct these evils was manifestly one of the objects for which Christ established His Church on earth. He intended that it should be a society of pious and holy brethren, who, being freed from all selfishness, malice, envy, jealousy and revenge, would be united in the strongest ties of fraternal affection (Matt. xx. 26; Rom. xii. 10; Eph. iv. 3; Phil. ii. 3; Heb. xiii. 1; 2 Peter i. 7). And hence it is often called a body, of which Christ Himself is the Head, and all who are united to Him by faith and obedience are the members (Rom. xii. 5; 1 Cor. xii. 12–28; Eph. iv. 12–16). In this body, there is manifestly no room for caste; no ground for worldly distinctions of any kind. In it, says Paul, "there is neither Jew nor Greek, neither bond nor free, neither male nor female; but all are one in Christ Jesus" (Gal. iii. 28). As members of the one family of God, all have a Divine right to whatever is really necessary to their being and their well-being. They are all required to "bear one another's

burdens" (Gal. vi. 2), and, as stewards of the manifold grace of God, to minister to each other's wants in every way that is possible (Rom. xii. 13; Gal. ii. 10; Heb. vi. 10; xiii. 16; 1 Peter iv. 9; 1 John iii. 17). Not that every one should possess the same amount of wealth, and have the same social position and influence in the body. This does not follow from our premises. God bestows His talents on His children according to the ability which He has given them (Matt. xxv. 15). And so, also, He has arranged the several members of the body (1 Cor. xii. 18). Some, having higher gifts, are made more responsible than others; but, nevertheless, "the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you" (1 Cor. xii. 21). The members are all so arranged, that there should be no cause of strife or schism among them, but that "the whole body being fitly joined together, and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part," might constantly increase "unto the edifying of itself in love" (Eph. iv. 16).

Now, if all this were done according to the tenor and spirit of the Commission, as given to us by our blessed Lord, who can estimate the happy results that would follow? What a glorious body the Church would then become, "having neither spot, nor wrinkle, nor any such thing!" The poor would no longer be put to shame in the presence of their rich brethren; and the rich would no longer trust in their uncertain riches; but remembering that all things are ours, "whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come," we would all, in humility and love, labor to promote each other's welfare, and trust only "in the living God who gives us all things richly to enjoy." And then how very interesting would be our meetings for social worship! How much more we would all see of the beauties of God's Word; how sweet would be the melody of our psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs; and how fervent and refreshing would be the prayers of an assembly filled and animated with the love and Spirit of Christ! Like David, we would all rejoice

when our brethren would say to us, "Let us go up to the house of the Lord;" for then Jerusalem would be our chief joy.

## SECTION IV.

*Benefits to the world.*

The Church was established on earth for the enlightenment and salvation of the world. As Christ by the grace of God suffered death for all men, so also the Commission embraces all. "Go ye," said our blessed Saviour to His Apostles, and through them to His Church, "and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; teaching them to observe all things whatever I have commanded you; and, lo, I am with you all the days, even to the end of the age." They did go. Beginning at Jerusalem, they went thence to Samaria and other cities of Palestine; and thence to the uttermost parts of the earth. And, though opposed by priests and philosophers, and kings and princes, their triumphs were everywhere without a parallel; and, finally, the banner of the Cross waved in

triumph over the ruins of fallen paganism throughout the Roman Empire.

But then a compromise was effected. The Church became carnalized and secularized. It was no longer the pure and simple word of God that was proclaimed to the people, but everywhere the Gospel was henceforth corrupted and perverted by "the doctrines, opinions, and commandments of men." As a consequence, the Man of sin was born, and, for one thousand years, Popery ruled the world. At length the Reformers of the sixteenth century arose, and Protestantism made an effort to restore to the people the primitive Gospel. Much was done by such men as Luther, Melancthon, Zwingle, and Calvin, to free the human mind from the enslaving fetters of Popish tyranny and superstition; but to this day the Commission of Christ and the teachings of His Apostles are greatly neglected by carnalized and sectarian Churches. The consequences are ruinous. Personal piety, as a general thing, falls far short of the Divine standard; family worship and family training are very much neglected; the Church is still

in alliance with the world; and many for whom Christ died, and who might be saved through the faithful practical presentation of the truth, are daily perishing in their sins.

Who, then, can estimate the happy consequences that would result to the world, if the Church, freed from all the errors and corruptions of both tradition and philosophy, would, in obedience to the Commission of our blessed Saviour, earnestly endeavor to make disciples of all the nations, teaching them at the same time to observe diligently and faithfully all that is required of us in the writings of the Apostles? That it is her duty to do so, no one, who properly understands the Scriptures, can doubt for a moment. Upon her will ever rest, "even to the end of the age," the solemn obligation to carry out the Commission of Christ, according to the example and instructions of the Apostles. She is now "the pillar and ground of the truth" (1 Tim. iii. 15); the candlestick, that is to dispense the light of the Gospel to the benighted nations of the earth (Rev. i. 20). And hence it is made our duty to do good to all men as we have opportunity

(Gal. vi. 10). "Let him that heareth, say, Come," is one of the last and most solemn of all the charges that Christ has given to His disciples (Rev. xii. 17). Let the standard of personal piety then be first properly elevated; let the houses of all Christian parents be made houses of prayer and nurseries of virtue; let the Church become what she ought to be, and what, by the Commission of Christ and the teachings of the Apostles, she is really required to be, and very soon the work will all be accomplished. "The everlasting Gospel" will soon be preached to "every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people" under heaven (Rev. xiv. 6); the kingdom of the world will soon become the Kingdom of Christ (Rev. xi. 15); and the world itself will soon become a temple of His praise.

From these premises the following reflections are naturally suggested:

1. Christianity must be of heavenly origin. "Judge the tree by its fruit." The religious systems of the ancient Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans, have all passed away, because they were all impure, selfish, and of evil tendencies.

There was nothing in them to sanctify and elevate the human soul, to make all men love one another as brethren, and practically recognize and acknowledge their paramount obligations to God as their Creator, Preserver, and Redeemer. And, for the same reason, Mohammedanism, Braminism, Buddhism, and all other religious systems of human origin, are rapidly waning before the increasing light of modern civilization. But Christianity, carried out into practice, would make even this sinful world a paradise, by requiring and enabling all men to love God supremely and their neighbors as themselves. Surely, then, it must be not of human but of Divine origin.

2. How very great must be the obligations of all men to receive and obey the "form of doctrine" that has been delivered to us in the Holy Scriptures! If it was conceived in the love and wisdom of God, procured through the blood of Christ, revealed by the Holy Spirit, and handed down to us through the labors, sufferings, and death, of many heroic martyrs, then, indeed, what must be the destiny of those who wilfully neglect or reject it? What else

can such men expect than "a certain fearful looking for a judgment and fiery indignation which shall devour the adversaries?" But—

3. How inconceivably glorious must be the destiny of those who, from the heart, receive and obey the "form of doctrine" which God has so graciously revealed to us in the Gospel! If it serves to make us all so very happy, even now in this world of sin and death, what must be the effect when, freed from all impurity, and invested with bodies like unto the glorious body of the Son of God, we shall be allowed to unite with myriads of angels and all the ransomed millions of our race in ascriptions of praise to God and the Lamb, for ever and ever! Let us, then, dear reader, endeavor so to live that, by the grace of God through Christ, this destiny may be ours.

# APPENDIX.

*Inquiry after the proper standard of rectitude.*

But few words are of more frequent and general occurrence than the words *right* and *wrong*. They or their equivalents are used by all classes of persons in all climes and in all countries; by the wild tribes of Asia, Africa, and Oceanica, as well as by the more enlightened nations of Europe and America, thus clearly indicating that *the general ideas* expressed by these terms are known everywhere. And hence, go where we will, we find that the forms and administration of public justice are everywhere, to some extent, recognized and respected.

But, nevertheless, when men come to consider and decide as to what is right and what is wrong in particular cases, they differ very greatly. There is, indeed, scarcely any thing

that is regarded right by some persons, that has not, under some circumstances, been considered wrong by others. And the converse of this is also true. Most writers on morals, for example, believe and teach that it is wrong to lie under any circumstances; but others dissent from this, and maintain that it is sometimes right to tell a lie. Most persons believe that it is wrong to steal; but, in ancient Sparta, theft was encouraged under certain circumstances; and so, also, were many other practices which are now commonly regarded as vices. Plato recommends the murder of weak and sickly children, and speaks of drunkenness at the feasts of Bacchus as eminently proper and praiseworthy. The Stoics commended suicide as a cardinal virtue; and the obligations of marriage were generally disregarded by the ancient philosophers.

It is, therefore, of primary and paramount importance to have some given standard, by means of which we may be able to determine what is right and what is wrong in all cases and under all circumstances, somewhat after the manner in which the farmer estimates the

amount of his grain by means of his half-bushel, and the merchant the quantity of his cloth by means of his yard-stick.

The great importance of this has always been felt and conceded; but the difficulty has been to find such a standard. Some have made conscience the standard of rectitude. They affirm that whatever conscience approves is right, and whatever it disapproves is wrong. But this hypothesis is manifestly erroneous; for it is not the province of conscience *to judge*, but simply *to execute*. It belongs, not to the judicial, but to the executive, department of our spiritual nature. This will, I think, appear quite obvious to all on a little reflection. But, in order to make it as plain as possible, let us refer briefly to some of the primordial and elementary operations of the human mind.

There is, then, manifestly in the conduct of all responsible agents *a moral quality*, which, when perceived, even ever so imperfectly, excites within us *a feeling of obligation*. We then feel that we ought, or that we ought not; that he ought, or that he ought not.

For the sake of illustration, let us refer for

a moment to the case of the beautiful. We first perceive, it may be very imperfectly, the quality of the beautiful in objects; as, for instance, in the rose, the sky, or in the human face. This in turn excites within us the peculiar feeling of the beautiful; and this again rouses into activity that faculty of the intellect which is variously called the intuitive faculty, the understanding, etc., through which we get the *general idea* of the beautiful — an idea which is acquired in the very earliest stages of infancy, and which, like the *general idea* of causality, identity, time, place, number, etc., is therefore common to our race.

In a way somewhat analogous to this we obtain our first impressions of right and wrong in human conduct. The mind itself perceives, through the eye of reason, some of the moral relations which we sustain to one another. This perception is at first, no doubt, very imperfect; but it is, nevertheless, sufficient to excite, in some measure, our moral sensibilities, and so to awaken within us a feeling of obligation. And this again rouses into activity the intuitive faculty, which in turn gives us all, at

a very early age, the *general idea* of right and wrong.

But, before we can determine what is right and what is wrong in any given case, we must first understand clearly all the moral relations that are involved in it. For, if our premises are defective, so also most likely will be our conclusions. And hence it is that our unassisted reason is ever liable to err in her moral judgments. For, while she sees clearly one relation, or one set of relations, she may utterly fail to perceive others that are equally involved and equally important. To understand, for instance, our duties and our obligations to our parents, we must first understand fully and distinctly our relations not only to them, but also to God and to society; for Christ says, "He that loveth father or mother more than me, is not worthy of me" (Matt. x. 37). But, to perceive clearly and fully our relations to the moral universe in any given case, is manifestly a problem too high and too complicated for our unassisted reason. We know only in part; and hence it is that we are always liable to err in our moral judgments.

But these judgments, whether right or wrong, partake of *a moral quality*, and serve, therefore, to excite our moral sensibilities; and through them they incline and move us to act accordingly. It is not the province of conscience, which I here regard as equivalent to our moral sensibilities, to go back of these judgments, and decide in any case whether they are correct or incorrect. Not at all. The sheriff has nothing to do with the decisions of the judge, but to execute them. If the judge has made a mistake, through want of evidence or otherwise, the error is his; and it is his province to rëexamine the case, and make the necessary corrections. Then, and not till then, can the sheriff, with propriety, change or reverse his action. The judge decides to-day that John Jones, for example, is guilty of manslaughter, and orders that he be committed to prison; but to-morrow, after a rëexamination of the case, he declares him innocent, and gives orders that he be released. In both cases the sheriff follows implicitly, and with propriety, the decision of the judge. The

judge is inconsistent, but the sheriff is not. In both cases he simply does his duty.

Now, just so it is with regard to reason and conscience. So long as Paul regarded Christ as an impostor, so long did his conscience prompt and urge him "to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth" (Acts xxvi. 9). But as soon as his reason reversed her former decision and brought in a verdict in favor of the claims of Christ and His religion, so soon did his conscience also change her course. Henceforth he was constantly moved by this inward monitor to suffer all things for the sake of Jesus.

It is obvious, therefore, that conscience cannot, with propriety, be made the standard of rectitude. In matters of indifference it may often be a sufficient guide, but not in morals; for it is obvious that a man may act conscientiously, and be at the same time a very great transgressor of moral law. But, nevertheless, it is well to observe here, that we can never innocently act contrary to the dictates and promptings of our conscience. After Paul was duly enlightened, he regarded him-

self as a very great sinner while he was conscientiously engaged in persecuting Christ and His followers; but nevertheless he would have been guilty of a still more heinous sin had he done otherwise under the circumstances; that is, while his judgment concerning Christ and the law of God was what it was. "I obtained mercy," he says, "because I did it ignorantly in unbelief" (1 Tim. i. 13). His was an error of the head, not of the heart. It was not wilful and open rebellion against God, but a sin of ignorance—a sin for which he would, however, have been justly condemned, had he not in mercy been brought to the knowledge of the truth; and through the truth to the obedience of the Gospel. It follows, therefore, that a man may be justly condemned, though he act conscientiously; but that, if he act otherwise, he will certainly be condemned as a rebel against the authority and government of God. "For if our heart condemn us, God is greater than our heart and knoweth all things" (1 John iii. 20). *A perfect moral action must therefore be in harmony with the truth, and must, at the same*

*time, proceed from a pure and proper motive.* The first of these conditions was wanting, as we have seen, in the case of Paul; and the second, in the case of Sennacherib, whom God sent up to punish the children of Israel for their multiplied transgressions. (*See* Isa. x. 5–12; and also Rom. viii. 8; xiv. 23; Heb. xl. 6.)

Conscience, then, though in a subordinate sense a guide of life, is not the standard of rectitude, because it is not its province to discover the truth, but simply to enforce what reason says is in harmony with it. Many, perceiving this, have made expediency the standard of right and wrong. This was the standard of the Socratic school, and it has also been adopted as such by many modern writers. They allege that "happiness is our being's end and aim," and that whatever, therefore, serves to promote the well-being of society and of the several individuals of which it is composed, "must be right, and cannot be wrong." This is plausible, and with proper restrictions and limitations it may be even conceded as true. But, nevertheless, it will not do to

make expediency the standard of rectitude. For—

1. We are seldom, if ever, capable of determining in and of ourselves what is for the highest good of society, and of the several members of which it is composed. It is not an easy matter to weigh all the effects and consequences of any one moral action. These may, for aught we know, extend to the confines of the moral universe, and they may, peradventure, touch cords that will continue to vibrate throughout the endless cycles of infinite duration. When Eve saw, or thought she saw, that the forbidden fruit was a thing to be desired to make one wise, she deemed it very expedient to partake of it. But what finite mind is capable of estimating the consequences that flowed from that one act of disobedience? It was doubtless expedient, as Caiaphas taught the Jews, that Jesus "should die for the people" (John xi. 49–52), but who is able to sum up all the consequences of the unrighteous decision of the Jewish Sanhedrim and the Roman procurator, which resulted in putting to death the Lord of Life and Glory?

Manifestly such matters are too high, too complex, and too far reaching for our finite reason. Even the philosophic Paley justifies the physician in making false representations to his patients for their encouragement, forgetting, at the same time, that our confidence rests wholly on what we believe to be the truth, and that, when physicians are known to disregard it habitually, their assurances fail to give confidence to their patients or to any one else. Before, therefore, we can, with consistency and propriety, make expediency the guide of our lives, we must, in some way, be qualified to know and understand the infinite.

2. The practical effect of making expediency the standard of rectitude is to promote selfishness. That "charity begins at home" is a favorite maxim with this school of philosophers. Men may talk learnedly and eloquently about "the greatest good to the greatest number," "the paramount interests of society," etc., but the practical tendency of every system of ethics founded on the doctrine of expediency is, to draw away the hearts of the people from both God and society to nar-

row, partisan, and selfish considerations. And hence it is that all manner of error and malpractice has been justified on the ground of expediency.

It will not do, then, to make expediency the standard of rectitude: 1. Because, by so doing, we are ever liable to approve, as morally right, what is in itself wholly inconsistent with truth and righteousness; and, 2. Because every such rule inclines us to act from impure and selfish motives.

Is there, then, any standard which will serve as a test of both the *motive* and the *action?* Evidently there is. The will of God fulfils both of these conditions. It approves of only such actions in morals as proceed from pure motives, and which are, at the same time, in harmony with the truth itself.

In order to make this matter as plain as possible, let me refer first, by way of illustration, to our own political system. In framing this, the Constitution was itself made the basis and criterion of all subordinate laws and ordinances. And hence it is regarded by all American citizens as the standard of political

rectitude. Every officer of the Government is sworn to support it, by acting in harmony with its provisions. So long as they do this, they are supposed to do what is politically right; but, whenever they act inconsistently with its provisions, they are regarded as political transgressors. True, indeed, the laws of our country are often made a test of political rectitude; but this is done only on the presumption that the laws are themselves in harmony with the Constitution; so that the Constitution is really, after all, the ultimate standard of what is right and wrong in all our governmental affairs.

Has, then, the moral government of the universe a constitution? Has it any thing analogous to the Constitution of our republic, to which we can make our final appeal in the investigation of all moral questions? Manifestly it has. The nature of God sustains to the moral universe a relation similar to that which our own political Constitution sustains to our republic. A few remarks will, I hope, make this obvious to all. Consider, then, that there was a time when God existed, and noth-

ing else besides Him: for every thing had a beginning but God Himself. But, moved by the free and generous impulses of His own nature, He, in the fulness of time, created all things that are. He made the laws and ordinances, and all the subjects of His moral government, *according to His own nature;* or, as we commonly say, "according to the counsel of His own will" (Eph. i. 11). And hence it is evident that the nature of God, embracing, as it does, all the essential principles of morality, is the constitution of the moral universe, and that as such it is really the ultimate standard of rectitude, for in it we have given the immutable foundation of all right, truth, justice, purity, holiness, and love. Whatever, therefore, is according to the nature of God, is right, and whatever is contrary to His nature is wrong. For example, to speak the truth is right, because God is a God of truth. "I am," says Christ, "the way, *the truth*, and the life" (John xiv. 6). But to tell a lie is wrong, because "no lie is of the truth" (1 John ii. 21). And hence it is that God cannot lie (Titus i. 2), because this would be to deny Himself (2

Tim. ii. 13). He can do any thing that is in harmony with His own nature, but nothing that is contrary to it. To do justice and love mercy is right, because this is also in harmony with God's nature. He is himself a God of justice and of great mercy. And hence all manner of injustice and cruelty is wrong, because it is inconsistent with the Divine nature. And just so it is with every other species of vice and immorality.

The nature of God, as the constitution of the moral universe, is therefore, beyond all doubt, the supreme and ultimate standard of rectitude. On this we may ever rely as a sure foundation. Whatever is for God's glory is right in itself, because every such thing must of necessity be in harmony with His own nature; and whatever, therefore, is done for His glory, must in like manner proceed from a right motive, because there is, in fact, nothing ulterior to this, and nothing higher than this. But, in practical ethics, it is more convenient to make the *will* of God the standard of rectitude. And to this there can be no objection, as His will is, of course, always in perfect har-

mony with all the other elements and perfections of His nature and character. Whatever is in harmony with His nature, is also in harmony with His will; and whatever is in harmony with His will, is in harmony with His nature. And hence we say, with propriety, that to speak the truth is right, because it is in harmony with God's will; and to utter a falsehood is wrong, because it is contrary to His will. We will, therefore, for the sake of convenience, and in harmony also with the teachings of the Holy Spirit, receive and regard the will of God as the standard of rectitude. Whatever, including both the motive and the act, is in harmony with it must be right and cannot be wrong; and whatever is inconsistent with it, either in volition or in action, must be wrong and cannot be right. And hence we are told that it was the meat and drink of Christ to do the will of His Father (John iv. 34; v. 30; vi. 38, etc.).

But how may the will of God be taken and applied as a standard of rectitude? Manifestly before this can be done we must have an *expression* of it. God Himself must indicate to

us, in some way, what His will is in such and such cases, and under such and such circumstances. And this He has in fact done, partly in creation, partly in His providence, and partly in the revelation which He has given to us in the Holy Scriptures. All Nature, as it came orginally from the hand of Jehovah, was but an index and expression of His will, attributes, and perfections. For, as David says, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge" (Psa. xix. 1, 2). Previous to the fall of man, Adam was, therefore, no doubt able to read and understand much of God's will from the book of Nature. But, since that melancholy event, the case has been very different. Our own mundane system is no longer what it was when it came originally pure and unsullied from the hand of its Creator. It is now like a fallen city or temple, on the walls and columns of which were originally inscribed, in plain and legible characters, many plain and instructive lessons. But now these walls and columns are all in ruins. One frag-

ment lies here, and another there, covered with rubbish, dust, and mildew; so that it is now exceedingly difficult, and indeed often impossible, to collect together in their proper order the words and sentences of the original inscriptions. Every organ of the human body, for instance, was originally designed to promote our happiness. The eye, the ear, the teeth, the brain, the lungs, the stomach, and the heart, were all created and placed in the body for wise and benevolent purposes. They were manifestly intended by the Creator to be means and media of pleasure to every human being. But sin has deranged and perverted them all. And hence it is that the pleasure which we now derive from them is often mingled with very great pain. And not only so, but the very earth itself has been cursed on account of sin; so that "the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now" (Rom. viii. 22). On this account it is often difficult, and indeed sometimes quite impossible, to learn God's will from the book of Nature, even in reference to such matters as

were made plain to Adam before Nature was wrecked and perverted by sin.

And so, also, it is often no easy matter to learn God's will from the book of providence. For in providence God always works through the media and instrumentality of second causes. The laws and forces of Nature are all made tributary to the will and purposes of their Creator. Even wicked men and demons not unfrequently have an agency in bringing about and accomplishing the benevolent designs and purposes of God. Pharaoh, Judas, Caiaphas, and even Satan himself, have all contributed in some way to magnify the Divine law, in accomplishing the Divine will. And hence we see one of the reasons why it is that the problem of God's providence is rendered so very difficult and complex; and why it is that we are ever so very liable to misinterpret and misapply its teachings. In the late war, for instance, the hand of God was often very signally manifested; but so also were the hands of men and the hand of Satan. And hence great caution is necessary in reading the lessons of God's prov-

idence, lest, perchance, we erroneously ascribe to Him what is really the work of Satan and his emissaries.

But in the revelation of His will, which God has so graciously given to us in the Holy Scriptures, the case is quite different. Here there is no such commingling of truth and falsehood, virtue and vice, good and evil. The will of God is in all cases made clear and distinct, so far as the record goes. The Bible may, and probably does, contain but a small element of God's gracious will and purposes. He may have revealed to other worlds and systems a thousand-fold more than He has to us; and, for aught we know, we may now have, as it were, but the mere alphabet of what God will yet unfold to us as the cycles of eternal duration roll on. But it is, nevertheless, a consolation to know that we have even now all things that are really necessary to life and godliness (ch. iii., pp. 154–212); that God has given to us in the Holy Scriptures such a revelation of His will as, when taken in connection with the light of Nature and providence, is to us, at present, an all-sufficient guide.

We have but to study the Bible humbly and prayerfully, with a sincere desire to know God's will and to do it, and all will be well. The way of duty will then become so very plain, that all may readily see it, and walk in it (Isa. xxxv. 8).

It is manifest, therefore, that the paramount want of the present age is the practical adoption and general recognition of this Divine standard as the only sure and proper guide of life. Let this be done, and the practical inquiry will no longer be, What is expedient? or What does my own unenlightened conscience require? but simply WHAT IS GOD'S WILL IN THE CASE? In this way *a habit* would soon be formed, even in early youth, that would save us from a thousand ills in this life, and, at the same time, serve to prepare us for the life which is to come.

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